DO CONSERVATIVES UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE?

DAVID NOVAK

DO HAWKS UNDERSTAND THE SHIA?

LAWRENCE F. KAPLAN

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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SARS Won't Change China

JASPER BECKER

Where Are the Vaccines?

SHANNON BROWNLEE

Learning From the Flu

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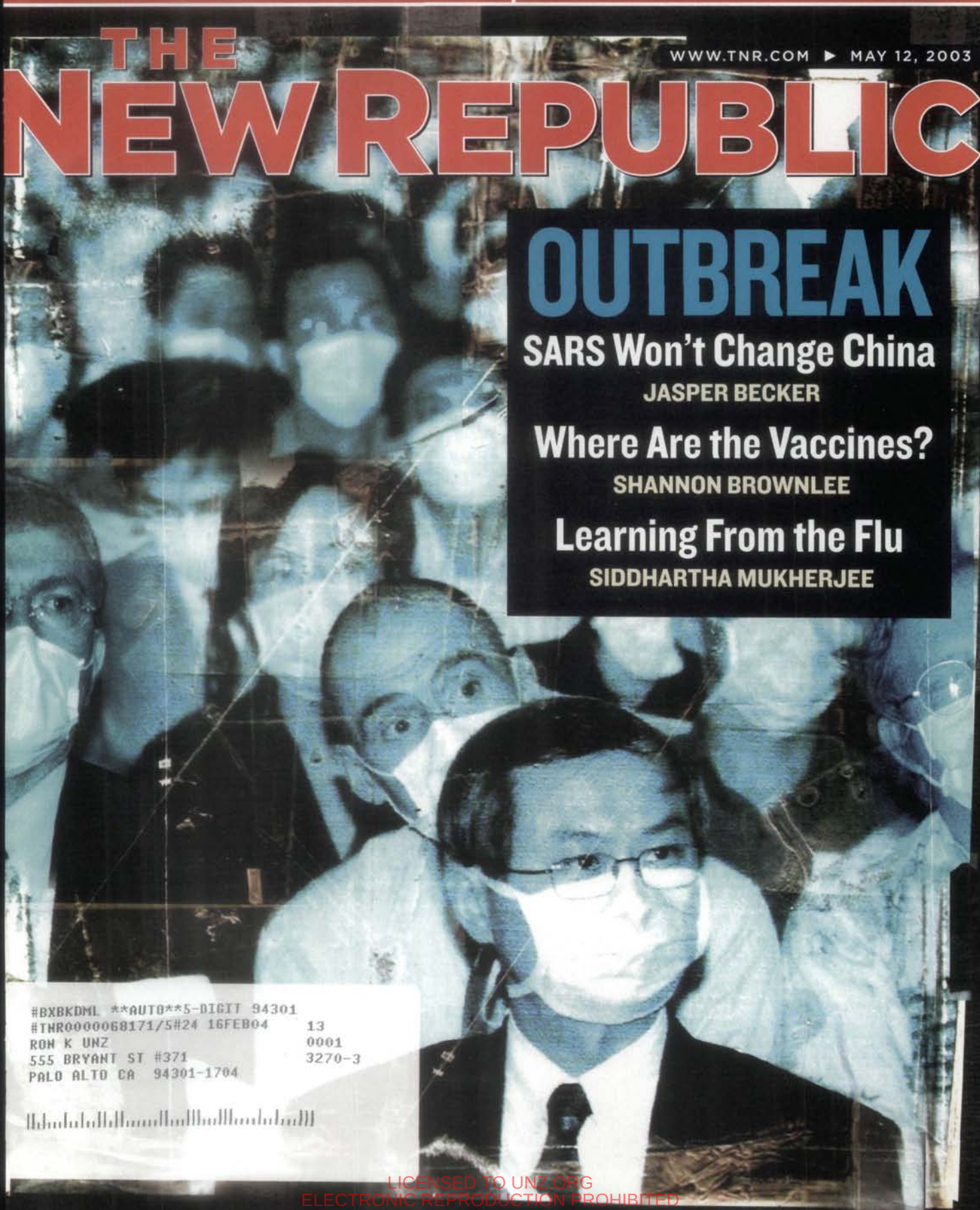

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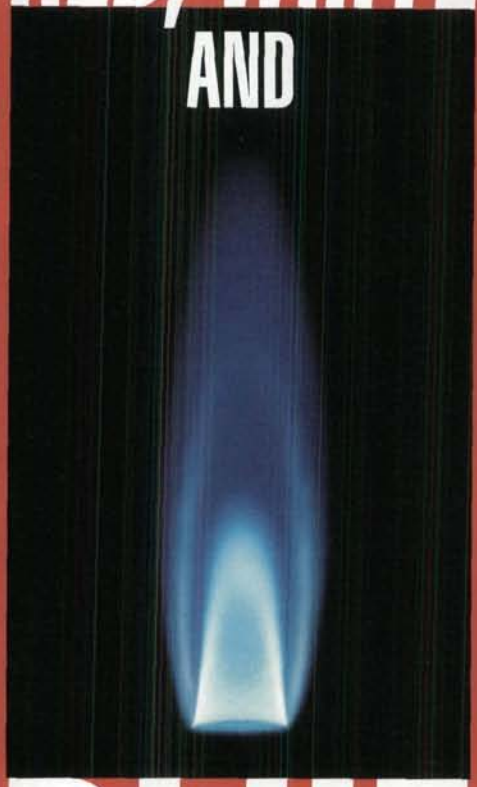

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CORRESPONDENCE

MYTHIC PROPORTIONS

SAMANTHA POWER'S TROUBLING YET enlightening work *"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide* prepares me to react strongly to the ignorance that still seems to misinform the European worldview and the liberal opposition stateside identified in Jonathan Chait's article "Power Strip" (March 31). I truly hope that George W. Bush's war has "torn apart something well-established" to dismantle an international order that has allowed decades of genocide to flourish in a system of collective security that hesitates to act. Indeed, an America that chooses to wage war against such evil is a clear departure from this immoral legacy. War is never an easy choice for any nation. However, preserving the myth of international law and a collective world unity has engendered genocide in our time. I would rather live in a world made less secure without such myths than go through yet another age of genocide.

JOHN G. OAS
Cleveland, Ohio

CHAIT MISSES SOMETHING IN HIS otherwise excellent piece on the United States and the U.N. Security Council. Namely, that the Bush administration has advanced as one of its main arguments for the war the fact that Saddam has violated Security Council resolutions. The United States should not be hamstrung by the United Nations when it needs to defend itself or prevent genocide. However, when the Security Council is against a war that is supposedly being fought to enforce its own rules, the situation becomes problematic. If the administration had shown Saddam was a clear threat to us, it would be a different story.

ISAAC CHOTINER
Davis, California

WORLD ORDER

PETER BEINART WRITES, "THE antiwar camp was wrong to base its opposition on American isolation" and thereby "outsource critical strategic and moral judgments beyond America's borders" ("Sovereign Powers," March 31). I disagree. International law and common sense both dictate that we don't need the world's permission to wage a war of self-defense, but we can't wage a war to make the world a better place if the world disagrees.

In the war debate, hawks argued that toppling Saddam Hussein was necessary, both for U.S. self-defense and for the good of the world. Even most Americans rejected the self-defense argument, as evidenced by prewar polls showing a majority opposing war without international support. That left the good-of-the-world argument, which was more convincing to Americans but still failed to convince the world. International public opinion overwhelmingly opposed the war.

The people of the world are neither fools nor unconditional pacifists; they are no less capable of strategic and moral judgment than we are. If we claim to act for the world, and our claim is just, we can and must persuade the world before we act. We cannot save the world in spite of itself.

DANIEL J. FREED
Santa Monica, California

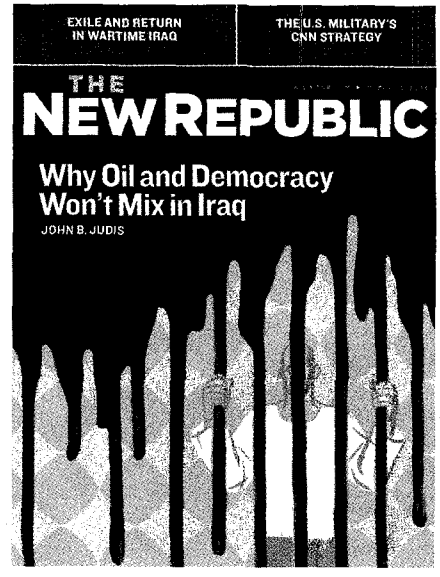
SECURITY SYSTEM

JOHN B. JUDIS OPENED HIS ARTICLE by writing, "Next to nuclear facilities, chemical plants pose the greatest danger in the case of a terrorist attack" ("Poison," January 27). Judis failed his readers in two areas: He did not clarify whether he was talking about defense nuclear facilities or commercial nuclear power plants (or both), and he instead proffered a sweeping, unsubstantiated claim of vulnerability at nuclear facilities.

To the contrary, nuclear power plants that provide electricity to one of every five U.S. homes and businesses are the most closely protected industrial facilities in the nation. They are fortified by robust steel and concrete structures designed to resist catastrophes and protect the reactor fuel. Further, they are protected by 7,000 expertly trained, well-armed paramilitary security officers and by state-of-the-art electronic surveillance and sensor technology.

The nuclear industry provides a template for security that many other facilities in the nation's industrial infrastructure would be smart to follow. That's why, at the conclusion of a two-day mock-terrorism simulation conducted last fall, former Deputy Defense Secretary John Hamre, now president and chief executive officer of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said that nuclear power plants are "probably our best-defended" industrial facilities against a potential terrorist attack on the U.S. critical infrastructure.

SCOTT PETERSON
Vice President
Nuclear Energy Institute
Washington, D.C.


EXILE AND RETURN IN WARTIME IRAQ
THE U.S. MILITARY'S CNN STRATEGY
THE NEW REPUBLIC
Why Oil and Democracy Won't Mix in Iraq
JOHN B. JUDIS

JOHN B. JUDIS REPLIES:

THE ARTICLE SPECIFICALLY DISTINguished between government protection of nuclear and chemical plants. I wrote, "[T]he government should be imposing the same strict anti-terrorist regulations on the chemical industry that it imposed on the nuclear, water-treatment, and airline industries. But it's not." ■

Please address letters to Correspondence, **The New Republic**, 1331 H Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20005; letters may also be sent electronically to tnr@aol.com. All letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be fewer than 200 words. Letters may be edited for space and clarity. Please do not send letters via fax.

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Kurt M. Landgraf,
President & CEO of
Educational Testing Service

"At ETS, we are working to build a 'new basic literacy' strategy for the 21st century."

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The Fourth Basic Literacy—Technology

Imagine a physician from the early 20th century in a modern, 21st century hospital. That doctor would be totally unfamiliar with the tools, equipment and methods involved in healing today. But, a teacher from that era would likely feel at home in many of today's classrooms. While technology has transformed the way we live and work, unfortunately it remains on the fringe of classroom life.

It's time to transform the way we use technology in our schools.

At ETS, we are working to build a "new basic literacy" strategy for the 21st century. We have created a global partnership among leading business, education, and public policy leaders to promote universal Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) Literacy. The partnership has produced a framework on how to teach and measure technological skills.

Teaching children today about technology is as fundamental as teaching reading, writing and arithmetic.

Connected to the Future, a new study from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, underwritten by ETS, Bell South, and Kodak, shows that more and more students are being exposed to the latest electronic innovations. Almost all of our schools are wired for the Internet, and access to technology is widely available. Yet all too often school computers sit idle. The study, conducted by Grunwald Associates, reveals that our schools are in danger of falling behind as a center for electronic education. This is especially true for schools serving low-income and minority populations. And it is kids in lower income communities who must rely most heavily upon schools for access to technology—to the tools they need to participate, compete and succeed in this digital age. Consider the following:

- 49 percent of Caucasian children use the Internet at home, compared to only 29 percent of African-American children, and 33 percent of Hispanic children
- Children from high-income families are more than twice as likely to have home Internet access (66%) than children from low-income households (29%).
- Despite strong growth in school access from 2000 to 2002 for low-income children (20 to 32 percent), their current school use still significantly lags behind high-income children (47 percent).

Between 2000 and 2002, the number of high-income families with high-speed Internet access almost quadrupled. The study shows school age children in these families watch less TV, spend more time online and get better grades. So we have an emerging gap between "connected" and "well-connected" kids. On one side we have kids with high-speed Internet access at home and plenty of computers in classrooms, and on the other, kids who must share a handful of computers in the school lab.

Placing computers in classrooms is essential, but it is just the first step. Technology must become an integral part of teaching and learning in all our schools. We have no choice but to transform today's classrooms in order to build vital technological skills and knowledge for tomorrow's workforce.

We invite you to continue this dialogue by sharing your thoughts and questions at www.ets.org or by mail.

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Sore Winner

TRB FROM WASHINGTON

AMERICANS SOMETIMES WONder why so many non-Americans view the United States as a bully. Are they jealous, resentful, irrationally afraid? Perhaps. But there's a simpler explanation for the widespread perception that the United States is vindictive, arrogant, and petty. Under this administration, it's true.

Consider the Bush team's behavior over the past few weeks toward countries that opposed the war in Iraq. Almost as soon as the fighting stopped, the French government started trying to mend fences. Paris abandoned its long-standing opposition to NATO control over the peacekeeping force in Afghanistan. In a surprise concession, and a break with Russia, it agreed to suspend (though not remove) U.N. sanctions on post–Saddam Hussein Iraq. Jacques Chirac warned Syria not to harbor Iraqi officials and telephoned George W. Bush, breaking a months-long silence between the two men. Jean-David Levitte, France's ambassador to the United States, said his government wanted to "turn this bitter page and think positively about what we have to do together."

The Bush administration responded with a high-level meeting to decide how to punish Paris for opposing the war. According to reports in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, the Bushies are considering downgrading France's status at international meetings and bypassing the North Atlantic Council, NATO's governing body, because France is a member. Bush officials noted that when the president attends the G-8 summit in Evian, France, this June, he will stay across the border in Switzerland. No pettiness here.

And it's not only France. President Bush, who famously refused to place a congratulatory phone call to Gerhard Schroeder after he was reelected on an antiwar platform, has not spoken to the German leader yet this year. The White House recently canceled a Bush trip to Ottawa, leading one Canadian academic to tell the *Times* that relations between the two countries were at "the lowest moment since the early 1960s." The United States has pointedly refused to set a date for signing a long-planned free-trade deal with Chile, which refused to use its rotating Security Council seat to back a second resolution authorizing war. (There are also reports, denied by Bush officials, that the United States has slowed talks on a trade deal with Thailand as punishment for its lukewarm stance on the war.) White House Envoy to the Americas Otto Reich recently warned Caribbean countries that their antiwar stance might bring U.S. "consequences." And, in a slap at Mexican President Vicente Fox, the former Bush pal who refused to back the Iraq war, the White House has scrapped this year's *Cinco de Mayo* celebrations. Pettiness? Perish the thought.

This retaliation isn't just vindictive; it's deeply stupid. First of all, it will hurt Iraq. Andrew Natsios, administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), recently told "Nightline"'s Ted Koppel that USAID would spend $1.7 billion this year—and not a penny more—to reconstruct Iraq. That's quite an admission, considering that the Council on Foreign Relations has put the cost of rebuilding Iraq at roughly $15 billion per year for the rest of the decade, and the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments has put the cost far higher. (When experts hear Bush officials claim that exports from Iraq's decrepit oil industry will fund the reconstruction, they generally laugh.)

After the first Gulf war, America's allies wrote most of the checks that rebuilt Kuwait. In fact, over and over in recent years—in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan—the United States has bled to win the war, and its democratic allies have paid to win the peace. It's a formula that needs to be vastly expanded if Iraq is to become a stable, liberal country. But, by doling out postwar snubs and restricting postwar contracts to U.S. firms, the Bush administration is doing its best to ensure that countries such as France, Germany, and Canada don't fork over the money Iraq desperately needs. Tony Blair sees the folly in this. Which is why Britain supports a large U.N. role in post-Saddam Iraq, a role that will give countries that opposed the war the political cover they need to fund Iraqi reconstruction. The White House, however, isn't listening to Blair—after all, even British companies weren't invited to bid for USAID contracts in postwar Iraq.

But the bigger problem isn't the impact of White House score-settling on Iraq; it's the impact on the United States. Key Bush officials—particularly Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld—clearly believe Al Qaeda and Saddam were emboldened in the 1990s by U.S. weakness. Their solution: Show terrorists and dictators that the United States hasn't gone soft; restore some good old-fashioned fear of Uncle Sam.

As an analysis of Saddam, Osama bin Laden, and Kim Jong Il, this makes sense. What has become appallingly clear in recent weeks, however, is that many in the Bush team apply the same logic to independent-minded Western democracies such as France, Germany, Canada, and Chile. The problem with America's relationships with its allies, they seem to feel, is that we don't throw our weight around enough. If we make countries that opposed the war suffer, they'll be more pliant next time around.

But there's a key difference between the way Bashar Al Assad makes decisions and the way Gerhard Schroeder does. It's called democracy. Supporters of the administration train their anger on antiwar leaders. Ask many American conservatives why France opposed the war, and, without missing a beat, they'll say it was because Chirac has a corrupt history with Iraq and feared what the United States might find in the Baghdad archives once Saddam was gone. What they generally overlook is that public opinion in France—and virtually everywhere else in Europe—massively opposed the war. I think those large antiwar majorities were wrong, but they were a response to perceived American arrogance and aggression. As Charles Grant, director of London's Center for European Reform, recently noted to *Businessweek*, "In every West European country, polls show that George W. Bush is seen as a greater threat to world peace than Saddam." Europeans ignored Saddam's horrors and identified with Iraq as a small country being pushed around by the United States. That public sentiment led leaders in Europe and in democracies such as Chile, Canada, Mexico, and Turkey to oppose the war. (In the case of Schroeder, a pro-war stance would probably have cost him reelection.)

In other words, governments across the world opposed the Iraq war to appease citizenries angered by perceived U.S. bullying. So now that the war is over—and our military victory gives us a chance to improve America's image—the Bush administration has responded with a fresh round of bullying. Sounds like a winning strategy to me.

PETER BEINART

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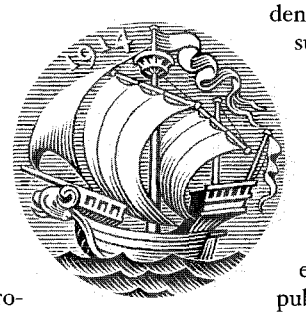
"An Inclusive Man"

It took President George W. Bush several days to respond to Senator Rick Santorum's unscripted remarks to the Associated Press about homosexuality. He attempted a couple of defensive passes—claiming, at first, through his Delphic spokesman, Ari Fleischer, that he never comments on current Supreme Court cases. But, finally, he came clean, praising Santorum's character and adding that he believes the senator is "an inclusive man."

We assume the president was apprised of Santorum's full remarks. They centered on the completely legitimate question of whether there is a right to privacy within the Constitution and Santorum's view that there is not a perfectly familiar and defensible one. But the full remarks that Santorum made—released only when the senator insisted that his remarks had been taken out of context—reveal something far more elaborate and extreme. Santorum argued that it is impossible to draw a firm, moral distinction between homosexual relationships and bestiality or child abuse. In the context of the recent crisis in the Catholic Church, he described the abuse of minors as a "basic homosexual relationship." More importantly, in making his Constitutional point about the right to privacy, he let slip a clearly political point: that he would disagree with a state that abolished anti-sodomy laws. There is no plausible inference from his comments except that the senator favors the criminalization of private, adult, consensual activity. In the current context, in which the Supreme Court is weighing an anti-sodomy law that targets gays but exempts heterosexuals from prosecution for the same acts, there is also no plausible evidence that he objects to that either. Indeed, neither he nor the president has said anything to distance himself from the position that private, gay sexual relationships should be crimes, and both men have had ample opportunity to do so. In fact, the president's only explicit comments on the discriminatory Texas law came when he was governor, and he endorsed it.

Of course, to believe that all private, gay relationships should exist under threat of police surveillance and criminal sanction is an honest, if draconian, view. But how on earth can the person who holds it be regarded as "an inclusive man"? It will be argued that Santorum is merely reflecting orthodox Catholic doctrine, that he loves the sinners and hates the sin. But Santorum goes much further. He wants to turn this "sin" into a crime, blurring any distinction between his own religious views and civil law. And he invites worrying questions about the principle involved. The theological reason for Santorum's opposition to same-sex sexual relationships, after all, is that they cannot be procreative. But the same could also be said of sex with contraception, a whole range of heterosexual sexual behavior, and even sex between the old or infertile. Does he propose making these "sins" crimes as well? If not, why not? In fact, his disquisition on the evils of gay sex, "man on dog" sex, and child abuse began with his aversion to the Supreme Court's *Griswold* case, which protected precisely the right to use contraception in one's own home. It is an absolutely legitimate question to ask of Santorum whether he wants to criminalize contraception as well.



But, of course, as a practical matter, he doesn't. His efforts extend only to homosexuals whose only offense is conducting their sexual lives in private. This is not an abstract issue. The current Court case involves two men arrested in their home only five years ago. In Oklahoma, another state with a law similar to Texas's, the punishment for the felony of private, gay sex runs up to ten years in jail, a sentence comparable to that for kidnapping. Whatever else these laws are, they and their backers cannot by any stretch of the imagination be called "inclusive." If the terms of inclusion for gay people in the Republican Party are that they must give up all private sexual relationships under threat of criminal law, then inclusion, in GOP doublespeak, really means second-class citizenship.

The president has appointed some openly gay men to his administration; his party chairman, Marc Racicot, recently met with the Human Rights Campaign; gay Republicans have been included in Republican discussions on the Hill and at the Justice Department; and the president has not reversed any of President Bill Clinton's attempts to support and protect gay government employees. These are all to the good. But the president is wrong to think that this tacit acknowledgment of gay citizens will work indefinitely. He still hasn't even said the word "gay" in public and acts as if it were somehow inappropriate to mention it. But we are not living in the 1950s, and this issue cannot be ducked much longer by hypocritical bromides about "inclusion." Either the president wants to include gay people in the American family, or he wants to cozy up to people who would throw them in jail. He cannot want both. And it's long past time that he made up his mind. ■

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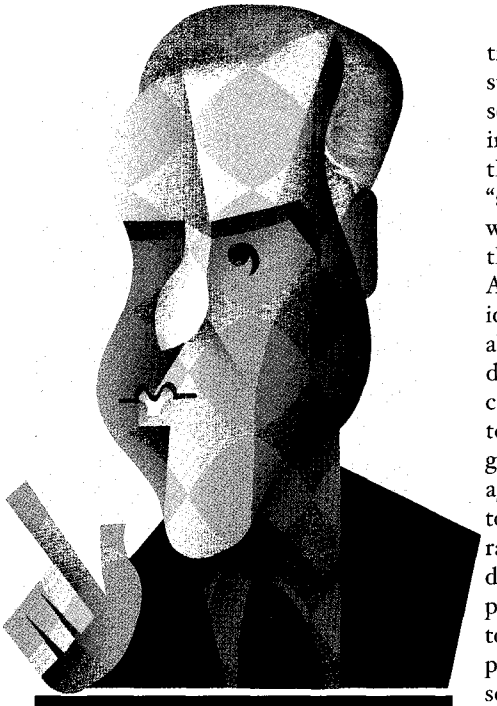
NOTEBOOK

HOWARD DEAN TAKES AIM . . . CHRISTIE WHITMAN TAKES A RIDE

TARGET PRACTICE

HOWARD DEAN LIKES TO CAST himself as a "straight talker"—a term meant to signify his willingness to tell the truth even when it's not politically convenient. Unfortunately, Dean's concept of straight talk increasingly seems to mean hurling accusations at his political opponents regardless of whether or not they're true. In March, Dean accused John Edwards of equivocating on war with Iraq in a speech before a convention of California Democrats. In fact, Edwards had endured a chorus of boos for sticking to his guns and telling the crowd, "I believe that Saddam Hussein is a serious threat and that he must be disarmed, including with military force if necessary." (Dean subsequently apologized to Edwards.)

Last week, Dean was at it again. After Dick Gephardt called for a total repeal of the Bush tax cut in order to finance health care reform, Dean shot back, "Why did Congressman Gephardt and too many in my party support huge tax cuts—tax cuts that make his own health care plan unworkable?" Actually, Gephardt unequivocally opposed the Bush tax cuts in 2001. (In a floor speech the day of the House vote, he declared the tax cut "is an outrage to the common sense and decency of the American people, and I ask each of the members to consider carefully their vote because I believe with all my heart it will be remembered for their entire career and will be remembered by them for the rest of their lives. . . . Vote no on this tax bill." We think that qualifies as opposition.) The following year, it is true, Gephardt refused to call for immediate repeal of the tax cut, but that was at the behest of vulnerable Democrats worried about being painted as tax-hikers in the November elections. The important point is that Gephardt opposed the tax cut when doing so had more than symbolic importance. Memo to Dean: Saying what's on your mind isn't so admirable if what's on your mind is scurrilous charges against your adversaries.



Howard Dean

A FREE PRESS TAKES ROOT IN IRAQ

"WE WILL BE AT THE SERVICE of any government that comes to serve the Iraqi people."—Ghadnfar Abdul Majid, formerly a news anchor on Uday Hussein's Shabab Television, explaining to *The New York Times* why he should continue to read the news in a post-Saddam Iraq.

DRIVING MS. WHITMAN

CHRISTIE TODD WHITMAN HAS long been the redheaded stepchild of the Bush Cabinet. An avid environmentalist back when she was governor of New Jersey, as head of President Bush's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Whitman has won a sort of Barney Fife reputation as the nation's chief ecological cop. Resources for environmental enforcement, as well as actions and fines against polluters, have steadily declined during her tenure. And so, not long ago, Whitman began talking about a new approach to policing the nation's polluters that she called "smart enforcement." The concept always sounded a little fuzzy. But now, thanks to *The Sacramento Bee* and the Associated Press, we may have a better idea of what smart enforcement is all about. It turns out the EPA has been diverting enforcement agents with specialized training and six-figure salaries to work as Whitman's personal security guards, chauffeurs, and assistants. One agent assigned to the EPA administrator was forced to hold a reserved restaurant table until Whitman strolled in for dinner. Another was asked to return her personal rental car. And, when it comes to chauffeur duty, Whitman is rather particular. According to a memo that some of her borrowed agents have received, the fastidious former governor likes her limo—always a Lincoln—started up with the inside temperature adjusted before she enters the car. She prefers jazz or classical music to be played and dislikes chitchat from the driver. (A simple hello from the boss is *not* an opening to complain about "what is wrong with the Bush administration," the memo warns.) Finally, agents should always call Whitman "governor," never "administrator." Which makes sense considering her evident devotion to her current job.

UNSETTLING

WE ARE NOT BABES IN THE woods. But, frankly, we were stunned to find, in reports this week of the settlement between ten enormous investment banks and various federal and state agencies, how thoroughly corrupt the leading players in the securities industry were—Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Credit Suisse First Boston, Merrill Lynch, UBS Warburg, Citi-Group, Bear Stearns, and others. You

DAVID COWLES

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name it; they did it. According to reports of the settlement, some of them encouraged analysts to gussy up research for their customers so companies that were in trouble—some of which ultimately collapsed—would look good to innocent and trusting investors. Some of them—including Citigroup—gave stocks in upcoming IPOs to favored customers or to executives of corporations whose business they coveted. (The firms accepted the settlement without admitting or denying its allegations.) These shenanigans undermine the foundations of democratic capitalism. They imperil the country's economic recovery. They endanger the financial viability of the middle classes and of the pension funds that underwrite the stability of our society. They are not, in other words, peccadilloes. They are serious offenses even though they have been orchestrated by individuals whose names adorn our hospitals and concert halls.

The Wall Street Journal has had difficulties treating this sordid story, and, on the day after the settlement was announced, its coverage simply left out the most interesting detail of the settlement, one involving Sanford I. Weill, chairman of Citigroup, the country's largest financial institution. Jack Grubman, the analyst who earned almost $50 million at Citigroup from 1999 to 2001 before resigning in August 2002—and whom Weill had persuaded to upgrade an analysis of AT&T by, among other favors, making a corporate contribution of $1 million to New York's chichi 92nd Street Y to pave the way for Grubman's children's admission to its preschool—had to put up $15 million of the $1.4 billion settlement. For some reason, however, Weill didn't have to part with any of his millions (he will be sued aplenty, however), but he has been forbidden from talking to any of his Citigroup research analysts unless a lawyer is present. This is a guarantee of nothing. Now that the principals have been investigated, and the auditors too, it is time to scrutinize what role attorneys may have played in smoothing the way for the scandals that started with Enron and Global Crossing and have now touched the investment-bank CEOs.

ALSO, DOSTOEVSKY DIDN'T KILL THAT PAWNBROKER

"In my article 'Gays and Genes' [NYR, March 27], John Colapinto should have been identified not as an 'intersex' child who was made into a girl shortly after birth and decided in his teens that he was really a boy, but as the author of a book about such a case, *As Nature Made Him: The Boy Who Was Raised as a Girl*. I regret these errors."—Andrew Hacker, writing a correction in the April 10 *New York Review of Books*. ■

Inside the Box | Bruce Reed

THE THIRD RAIL Saddam still at large on his sixty-sixth birthday. Bush's next move: "Even he can't survive my Social Security plan!"

HE'S BACK!

Gingrich attacks State Department for six months of diplomatic failure: "In my experience, if it takes you that long to alienate everyone, you're just not trying."

SEPARATION OF POWERS Rumsfeld rules out a religious government in Iraq: "We need John Ashcroft here at home."

CABLE GUISE Fox News fires engineer arrested for looting Iraqi art. Murdoch: "It's against company policy to steal anything but elections."

DOG AND MAN

Polygamists attack Santorum for calling them anti-family: "How many more do you want us to have?"

COMICAL ARI Bush says he loved watching upbeat Iraqi Information Minister Al Sahhaf: "If only we had that kind of spokesman for our economic team!"

ECONOMIC STIMULUS

Bush offers Greenspan another term: "See, the 2001 tax cut produced one job, after all."

CASHIERED White resigns as Army secretary. Old Enron execs never die; they just run out of options.

GINGRICH, SANTORUM, GREENSPAN: REUTERS PHOTO ARCHIVE

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The Pentagon's plan for the Shia.

Clerical Error

BY LAWRENCE F. KAPLAN

LAST WEEK, THE United States confronted a philosophical dilemma. Responding to televised images of angry Iraqis denouncing the United States, a chorus of Arab diplomats and American pundits warned that democracy in Iraq could lead to, well, theocracy in Iraq. Yet the Bush team seemed unfazed. When asked about the potential for clerical rule in Iraq, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld responded, "That isn't going to happen." His aides compared the hand-wringing in the press to the media gloom during the first week of the war. How could administration officials be so sanguine? Partly because of their assumptions about Iraq's civic life, which they do not believe will lend itself to an Iran-style theocracy. But mostly because of their own plan for Iraq, which they *know* will not lend itself to an Iran-style theocracy.

According to members of the Bush team, the Shia we saw on TV shouting "Death to America" were actually Potemkin Shia—many of them bought, paid for, and exported by Iran. As such, they hardly reflect the popular will of Iraq's Shia majority. This may seem like a convenient explanation, but there is a kernel of truth to the charge of Iranian interference. Last week's anti-American demonstrations in Najaf and Baghdad were orchestrated by the Tehran-based Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), an organization that seeks exactly what its title suggests. Indeed, as Pentagon officials were quick to point out, many of the placards the protesters waved were written in Farsi, not Arabic. As for demonstrations in Karbala, administration officials note that they were organized by Sayyid Muqtada Sadr, a self-described "deputy" of Iran-based cleric Kadhem Husseini Haeri, who on April 8 issued a fatwa exhorting his proxies "to seize the first possible opportunity to fill the power vacuum in the administration of Iraqi cities" and to "seize as many positions as possible to impose a fait accompli for any coming government." Lest anyone miss the point, the Iranian government has established a TV station along the Iraqi border, which has been repeating that message.

But hardly anyone at either the State or Defense Departments believes Tehran's message will prevail. "[Iraq's Shia] resent Iran as much as they resent us," says one official, summarizing the Bush team's conventional wisdom. It is probably more accurate to say that Iraq's Shia population, which remains deeply patriotic, is divided between secular and religious factions and that even the religious faction divides its loyalties between competing clerics. The senior-most of whom, Iraq's Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, opposes an Islamic state in Iraq and believes clerics should stay out of politics. But, even if his theocratic rivals gain the upper hand, their power would still be constrained by Iraq's sectarian and ethnic mix and the need to share governing arrangements with Iraq's Kurds and Sunnis.

Those arrangements are even now being drafted by an occupying power that has been repeatedly burned by Islamic extremism. The task of confronting it in Iraq falls to the Pentagon formally, because it is the Defense Department that will preside over Iraq's interim authority, and informally, because the Pentagon has now all but won the battle between it and the State Department over which path to take in the war's aftermath. Of the many disagreements settled in the Defense Department's favor, one in particular has immediate implications for U.S. policy toward the Shia. That is the debate over whether to cede power largely to exile or non-exile Iraqis. State Department officials argued that resident Iraqis should select officials in town meetings who would then serve in the interim authority. This may sound wonderfully democratic, but, in a country where nearly every member of the democratic opposition has either been murdered or driven into exile, it's also a recipe for electing the Shia extremists who made up much of Iraq's homegrown opposition. By contrast, the Pentagon's inclination to empower Iraqi exiles—particularly those affiliated with Ahmed Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress (INC)—virtually precludes that option.

Virtually, because ample civic space has nonetheless been reserved for Shia leaders with an anti-American bent. Or so it appears. In truth, the Americans behind the curtain have already taken steps to limit these leaders' room to maneuver. "The bottom line," explains a senior State Department official, "is we control the purse strings, the appointments, and anything else of political value [in postwar Iraq]. Not just anyone is going to get access to this." As evidence of their ability to co-opt, members of the Bush team point to the participation, despite earlier threats of a boycott, of hitherto anti-American firebrands in a U.S.-sponsored meeting of leading Iraqis in Baghdad this week. Moreover, attendees at future political conferences as well as the membership of a soon-to-be-organized Iraqi coordinating council will be vetted by American officials and "stacked" with friendly voices, particularly those belonging to the INC. Updating the Nixon Doctrine for Iraq, Pentagon officials intend the organization to fight political battles that Washington would rather not—marginalizing anti-American clerics and politicians without visible U.S. involvement. (Alas, this will do nothing to diminish the not entirely inaccurate perception of the INC as a U.S. proxy.)

Nor will Shia extremists have an opportunity to seize power through the ballot box, at least not any time soon. Members of the Bush team claim that, prior to any referendum, a constitution must be drawn up, an assembly convened, judicial reform enacted—all under the auspices of liberal Iraqis with close ties to the United States. Further, that constitution will include clauses designed to impede the rise of illiberal forces—among these, the diffusion of national power along federal lines, detailed arrangements for sharing that power in Baghdad, perhaps a ban on "totalitarian" political parties, and a commitment to regular elections. Those elections, moreover, will be held on a "rolling" basis, beginning at the mun-

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icipal level and proceeding only slowly toward the Iraqi center. In the meantime, American officials hope an influx of financial and humanitarian assistance will diminish Shia resentments in Iraq's south. And, when elections do come, administration officials predict that a more discrete and narrowly tailored influx of aid will give liberal forces an advantage. Indeed, as American troops in Baghdad and Kut pry self-appointed Iraqis from power, Special Forces and CIA officers have already fanned out across Iraq's south to bolster and create moderate Shia voices. Covert assistance may even be channeled to Shia clerics, possibly including Sistani himself.

True, all this hardly amounts to democracy at its purest. But neither is it without precedent. In many respects, too much has been made of the parallels between postwar Germany and Iraq. But the comparison holds in at least one sense. In Germany, as in Iraq, the United States went to war to oust one totalitarian foe and remained to thwart another. Nor did Germany's postwar architects shy away from resorting to vaguely anti-democratic means to achieve democratic ends. Hence the provision in its constitution that authorized the constitutional court to outlaw anti-democratic parties, proscribing both Nazis and Communists alike. Hence, too, the millions of dollars in covert aid that Washington delivered to voices of political moderation in Germany and throughout Western Europe during the decade after World War II. Like their predecessors six decades before, Pentagon officials remain keenly aware that Iraq's first national election could be its last and see no contradiction in taking similar measures to ensure that it is not.

But that is where the similarities between Germany and Iraq end. In the former case, a U.S. military government remained in place for years, not months. In the case of Iraq, however, the Defense Department, eager to avoid the taint of imperialism (and the burdens of peacekeeping), hopes to draw down American forces within six months and to pull them back to remote Iraqi bases even sooner. That means the task of securing the peace will probably fall to a NATO force tentatively comprising Americans, Brits, and Poles (yes, Poles). The point of the exercise will be to diminish the U.S. "footprint" in Iraq while at the same time keeping the United Nations out of the country.

There is a contradiction here. The Bush team has calculated that the danger of being seen as an occupier outweighs the danger of being seen as a cheapskate, and the demonstrations and shootings last week only bolstered this conviction. But, as even Washington's proconsul in Iraq, Jay Garner, concedes, "Before we begin the reconstruction successfully, we have to have security." Indeed, it is precisely the absence of security that Shia extremists have exploited in Iraq's south, filling a vacuum of our own making. Those problems won't disappear in six months; nor will the INC forces or the three NATO brigades envisioned for Iraq's next phase be sufficient to fill the vacuum.

To be sure, Washington will supervise from afar. But, by the time the grand experiment in reconciling Shia Islam and democracy actually commences, a sizable U.S. presence will be nowhere to be found. Both the demonstrators shouting "End the occupation" and the Iraqis hoping to quell them might want to brush up on their Polish. ■

Is Bush serious about WMDs?

Burden of Proof

BY JASON ZENGERLE

As the Bush administration crows over its military success in Iraq, it still faces one nagging question: Why can't it find any weapons of mass destruction (WMD)? After all, the Bushies' absolute certainty that Saddam Hussein had a massive arsenal of illegal weapons was the purported number-one reason for taking out the Iraqi dictator in the first place. Iraq "possesses and produces chemical and biological weapons," President Bush declared last October. On February 5, in a presentation to the U.N. Security Council, Secretary of State Colin Powell contended that Iraq had at least seven mobile biological-agent factories and "a stockpile of between one hundred and five hundred tons of chemical weapons agent." As recently as April 10, White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer said, "We have high confidence that they have weapons of mass destruction. That is what this war was about and is about."

But, so far at least, American efforts to find those WMD have come up empty. Which is why the Bush administration is now backpedaling a bit on the WMD issue. Although the Bushies continue to insist that Saddam had unconventional weapons, they no longer predict that they will necessarily find them. That's because, they now argue, Saddam may have destroyed or moved his illegal arsenal before the war began. So, instead of hunting for the weapons themselves, the administration is now hunting for Iraqis who can testify that those weapons once existed. "The inspectors didn't find anything, and I doubt that we will," Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said on April 17. "What we will do is find the people who will tell us." *The New York Times*' Judith Miller, who is embedded with an American military team hunting for unconventional weapons in Iraq, reported last week that an Iraqi scientist told the team that Iraq destroyed chemical and biological warfare equipment before the war—a revelation that has prompted the Americans to shift their "focus from finding such weapons to locating key people who worked on the programs."

The good news for the Bush administration is that weapons experts outside government don't generally question the administration's new WMD narrative. "It's entirely plausible that the Iraqis could have moved their weapons or destroyed them," says Kelly Motz, editor of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control's *Iraq Watch*. The bad news is that simply finding a few Iraqi scientists who'll vouch for the weapons' existence (and their subsequent destruction or transfer) won't be enough to settle the WMD question. Although Americans may not care a great deal about whether or not the United States ever proves that Saddam had WMD—a

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poll in mid-April found that 57 percent of Americans will still think the war was worthwhile even if WMD are never found in Iraq—the issue matters a great deal to the rest of the world, which is suspicious of America's motives for going to war. And it's doubtful that people outside the United States will be convinced merely by the testimony of Iraqi scientists. They'll need corroborating evidence.

FORTUNATELY, FOR ALMOST every unconventional weapon, such evidence can be found. The most important evidence is scientific. If one good thing can be said about the chemical and biological weapons Saddam was thought to possess—weapons such as VX and sarin nerve gases, mustard gas, anthrax, botulinum toxin, aflatoxin, and ricin—it's that they are, to varying degrees, detectable, even after they are destroyed. So, if Iraqi scientists tell American officials that under Saddam they produced VX nerve gas and subsequently destroyed it before the war began, American officials can visit the site where the VX was supposedly destroyed and conduct tests on soil samples and pieces of equipment to determine whether traces of VX are present at the site. What's more, they could send samples for testing to labs around the world—in Sweden, in Switzerland, even in France—to back up the American analysis.

In addition to scientific testing, there's more run-of-the-mill detective work—such as finding documentation, following money trails, locating equipment that might have been used to process biological and chemical weapons—that inspectors can undertake to back up whatever testimony they gather from Iraqis. "They need to have physical evidence to corroborate that testimony," says former U.N. weapons inspector David Kay. "Where you may not be able to get corroborating physical evidence is if people testify that they moved weapons to Syria or if they sold them to Hamas or Hezbollah or Al Qaeda. But even then, you ask, 'What did you get paid? Where's the money? How did it get transferred?' You need as much detail as possible."

Unfortunately, the Bush administration has so far failed to demonstrate the commitment to the WMD hunt that would make this detective work more possible. As Miller has reported in *The New York Times*, the four American military teams originally assembled to search for unconventional weapons in Iraq have been hobbled by a lack of resources as basic as vehicles to take teams to suspect sites and systems through which they can file encrypted reports from the field. The teams also lack officers senior enough to command attention. "The team Judy Miller is embedded with is led by a warrant officer," says one weapons expert. "In the military pecking order, I don't care if he found a nuke, a warrant officer's report would have to go through seven layers of bureaucracy before it got to someone who could do anything about it." What's more, two of the military teams originally assigned to the WMD hunt were recently taken off that task and reassigned to investigate war crimes and gather intelligence on other matters.

Making matters worse, the Bush administration has been slow to utilize several dozen civilian weapons inspectors, both Americans and foreigners, who were supposed to follow the military teams' initial work with more comprehensive searches. Indeed, many of the would-be inspectors have still not been sent to Iraq. "The [civilian] teams can't operate in a nonpermissive environment without having a protective force around them, and the argument for the last two weeks has been that we don't have enough forces to peel off to provide physical protection," says one person familiar with the civilian inspector program. "They didn't build into the plan the resources to do this, so now their argument for not doing it is that we don't have the resources." And resources, of course, are a reflection of will. ■

On the Hill

Hard Target

BY MICHAEL CROWLEY

IN POLITICS, IT'S hardly shocking to discover an internal strategy memo counseling Machiavellian tactics. But rarely do you find a document so cynical, shameless, and outright duplicitous as one that has recently circulated among Washington conservatives planning the personal destruction of Senate Democratic Minority Leader Tom Daschle.

"[W]e propose to destroy Daschle's credibility" and "ultimately help end his public career" declares the memo, which fell into the hands of giddy Daschle operatives (and whose existence was first reported by *Roll Call* this week). The campaign will require "a stiletto, not a sledgehammer," the memo explains, and therefore the slashing will be subtly executed "through humor." Soliciting donations of nearly $1 million for TV and billboard ads, the memo previews a campaign featuring two folksy characters, Del and Hurley, who will muse about their simple lives—and Washington tax policy—in an archetypal small-town barbershop. The ads will convey a "low-key, 'Hee-Haw'-like rural tone," continues the document, which describes the men as "speak[ing] in subdued monotones with a slightly detectable hint of a Scandinavian accent. They show almost no emotion." Think of *Fargo* retooled by Karl Rove and you get the idea.

In one ad, Del frets that the estate tax—or "death tax," as he naturally calls it—will take "half of what I got just because I died." That will make it impossible for him "to leave my empire to Little Del." And, dagnabit, "Tom Daschle won't repeal the [tax] from Washington." "Hmm," says Hurley, perhaps chewing on a cornstalk. "[Y]ou'd think Senator Tom would vote like the rest of us."

Never mind the rank dishonesty of the ad. (The estate tax only touches inheritances above $2 million per couple, and Daschle has voted to exempt all estates below $7 million per couple—a fortune that Del is unlikely to have amassed unless

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CAN HONEY REPLACE DRUGS?

In 1989, an editorial in the respected British publication, the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* stated:

> The therapeutic potential of uncontaminated, pure honey is grossly underutilized. It is widely available in most communities and although the mechanism of action of its properties remains obscure and needs further investigation, the time has come for conventional medicine to lift the blinds off this traditional remedy and give it its due recognition. (Vol. 82, pp.384-385).

In the 14 years since this editorial appeared, there has been an outpouring of work on honey—not anecdotes, but solid scientific studies—that document the medicinal value of honey.

The medicinal benefits of honey are due to honey's antibacterial properties and to its moisture retaining properties.

Honey has been show effective against a wide range of bacteria, including Helicobacter pylori (the main cause of stomach ulcers, and implicated in a number of other maladies) and Staphylococcus aureus, aka Staph (drug resistant strains of this pernicious bacterium are causing problems in hospitals across the country).

Honey has been shown to provide relief for, or to cure, a number of different disorders, including, but not limited to the following:

Diarrhea, ulcers, infections, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), gastrointestinal problems, and staphylococcus (staph) infections.

Infectious diseases caused by bacteria that are sensitive to Honey include the following:

Anthrax, diphtheria, urinary tract infections, ear infections, meningitis, respiratory infections, sinusitis, pneumonia, tuberculosis, infected animal bites, typhoid, dysentery, abscesses, boils, carbuncles, impetigo, tooth decay, puerperal fever, rheumatic fever, sore throat and cholera.

A number of different types of wounds have been successfully treated with Honey, including:

abrasions, amputations, abscesses, bed sores, burns, burst abdominal wounds following cesarean delivery, cancrum, cervical ulcers, chilblains, cracked nipples, cuts, diabetic foot ulcers and other diabetic ulcers, a fistula, foot ulcers in lepers, infected wounds arising from trauma, large septic wounds, leg ulcers, malignant ulcers, sickle cell ulcers, skin ulcers, surgical wounds, wounds to the abdominal wall and perineum, varicose ulcers.

The drug industry spends billions on advertising and promotion—$7 billion on sales representatives alone (*The New Republic*, December 16, 2002), billions more on print and TV ads. In contrast, the total sales of honey in the U.S. are miniscule—well under a billion dollars. The drug industry has a powerful lobby in Washington D.C., the honey industry has none. The "side effects" portion of drug information often runs into thousands of words, there are no side effects for honey. The advertising budget for honey is next to nothing. The positive results of clinical studies on honey are truly amazing—if drug companies had results like this you'd be bombarded with the data. Now, a new book details the amazing, proven benefits of honey.

HONEY
The Gourmet Medicine

by Joe Traynor

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- Honey for Other Maladies
- Honey: A Remedy for Antibiotic Resistance
- Honey: A Medicine Without a Profit

PART II: HONEY FOR ATHLETES
- [illegible]

PART III: [illegible]
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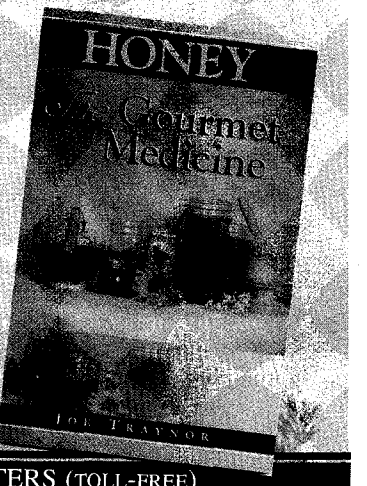

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his barbershop is located atop a diamond mine.) Though it's clear from the memo that real South Dakotans will have had almost nothing to do with these ads, the memo advises, "The effort must be . . . putatively based in South Dakota (to avoid the dismissive 'outsider' label routinely attached to such efforts in the past)." To this end, a front group has been "designed precisely to meet these criteria": The Rushmore Policy Council, an outfit so small it has no website or local telephone listing. The group exists, in other words, to put a phony local veneer on the GOP's efforts to ruin its number-one enemy.

Exquisitely venal as this little operation may be, it probably comes as no surprise to Daschle. For two years now, conservatives have waged a well-coordinated campaign to recast him from mild-mannered everyman to petty, partisan creep. Over the past two years, newspaper ads have put Daschle's image alongside Saddam Hussein's. Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum has called him a "rabid dog." Rush Limbaugh even wondered if Daschle was the devil himself. (Yes, really.) All the while, Republicans never tried very hard to disguise their larger strategic motives. One GOP official told *The Washington Post* in 2001 that orders to crush Daschle had come straight from the West Wing. And GOP pollster Frank Luntz laid the goals bare in an unforgettable December 2001 strategy memo: "Remember what the Democrats did to [Newt] Gingrich? We have to do exactly the same thing to Daschle."

This abuse probably helped Republicans win back the Senate last fall, relegating Daschle to the minority and seemingly solving the GOP's Daschle problem. To the fury of conservatives, however, even as leader of a chastened Democratic minority, Daschle has spent the past four months skillfully blocking Bush's domestic agenda—from oil-drilling in Alaska to judicial nominees like Miguel Estrada to the size of Bush's tax cut. And now the stakes are higher than they've ever been. With the war in Iraq behind him, his reelection campaign ahead, and the economy stalled, Bush is determined to rack up new domestic policy achievements. Daschle, meanwhile, faces an uncertain reelection campaign next year in South Dakota, where Bush's approval ratings are higher than his own. By fighting all-out against Daschle now, Republicans hope to limit his effectiveness in Washington—"to help neutralize Daschle's attacks" on Bush, as the Rushmore Policy Council puts it—and maybe even be rid of him once and for all.

DESPITE HIS LEGISLATIVE successes in the Senate, it has already been a hard year for Daschle personally. On the eve of the Iraq war in mid-March, he played into critics' hands with some ill-advised criticisms of the president, telling a union audience on March 17 that he was "saddened that this president failed so miserably at diplomacy that we're now forced to war." Republicans pounced en masse. House Speaker Dennis Hastert said Daschle had "come mighty close" to giving aid and comfort to the enemy. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, Republican National Committee Chairman Marc Racicot, Rush Limbaugh, and Sean Hannity each took their turn piling on. And, on a South Dakota talk radio program, the GOP's failed 2002 Senate candidate from that state, John Thune, said Daschle sounded more like he was from the south of France than from South Dakota. Har har.

Soon after, Republicans released a South Dakota poll purporting to show that Daschle would lose a 2004 matchup with Thune, who has already set up a fund-raising committee in preparation for another Senate run. Another survey, conducted by GOP pollster David Winston, showed Daschle's favorable-unfavorable rating at a dismal 28-40 ratio. Winston has a bias, to be sure, but his numbers roughly square with a late March CNN/Gallup/*USA Today* poll. Daschle aides note that those polls were taken at the peak of the attacks against him. But that didn't stop them from having an impact. Several media outlets, including *The Washington Post*, mentioned at least one of the polls, painting a picture of Daschle as a leader on the defensive.

Then there was the case of the purloined letter. In mid-April, *The Weekly Standard* was tipped off to a letter sent to Daschle by his local bishop telling him he should no longer identify himself as a Catholic because his political positions—on abortion, primarily—are at odds with Church policy. Once again, the conservative political-media machine began firing on all cylinders: From the *Standard*'s website, the story made its way to the *Drudge Report*; minutes later, Limbaugh was ranting about it on the air. Daschle aides suspect the source was not the bishop himself but Kenyon Gleason, a longtime aide to the bishop who is also a South Dakota Republican activist—and who appeared to be the same "Kenyon G." listed as a backer of a new Daschle-bashing website in the state. (Oddly, the name abruptly disappeared from the website this week.)

Attacks like these have already had some effect on how Daschle operates. Since his ill-timed comments about Bush's diplomacy, he has been conspicuously bland on the crucial subject of Iraq. Republicans hope that well-publicized questions about his Catholicism might force Daschle to show caution on social issues. Perhaps more importantly, the GOP aims to create enough problems for Daschle back in South Dakota that he'll be forced to spend hours each week working at his own reelection that he could otherwise spend trying to keep his caucus unified against Bush. By pinning Daschle down in South Dakota, the GOP also hopes to force him to spend more time campaigning and fund-raising for himself rather than for other Democratic senators who have relied heavily on his financial network in recent years. "It really is a complicated situation for him," says Winston. "What this all represents is a huge amount of time."

And yet, even as Republicans pummel him, Daschle has so far held his ground where it matters: on the issues. In contrast to their frequent acquiescence in 2001 and 2002, Senate Democrats have thus far shown a surprising unity against Bush's agenda. Daschle has suffered almost no defections on key votes in recent weeks—even as Republicans tried to use the conflict in Iraq for cheap leverage. In fact, Daschle aides say, the increasingly obvious ruthlessness of the GOP has only made his job easier. Democrats keenly remember how colleagues of theirs who tried to cozy up to Bush last year were brutally eviscerated come campaign season. "The strongest

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dynamic is the memory of Max Cleland," says Daschle adviser Anita Dunn. "It's hard to overstate the sense of revulsion at the White House's tactics." And, as for helping to get fellow Democrats reelected, Democrats say they're heartened by the remarkable fund-raising pace set so far by new Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) Chairman Jon Corzine, the former Wall Street mogul, who has kept pace with his GOP counterparts by bringing what Dunn calls his "Goldman Sachs kind of thinking" to the DSCC. (Corzine has even drawn up individual "business plans" detailing each Democratic senator's fund-raising responsibilities.)

That doesn't mean Daschle's life will be easy in the months to come. Bush, who planned to spend the night on an aircraft carrier this week, is clearly prepared to exploit his new military machismo on Capitol Hill. Daschle and his House counterpart, Nancy Pelosi, will have trouble competing with that kind of iconography. And more attacks are on the way. Back in South Dakota, Republicans are now peddling reports that Daschle is preparing to buy a $2 million home in—*mon Dieu!*—the French-colonial style.

This sort of thing, it seems safe to say, is not going to stop any time soon. Consider Paul Erickson, a Sioux Falls lawyer-operative and one of two local activists behind the "Daschle Accountability Project." Erickson was Pat Buchanan's 1992 political director and later represented John Wayne Bobbitt during his tawdry 15 minutes of fame. When contacted by a South Dakota paper about his group's destroy-Daschle strategy memo this week, Erickson didn't exactly apologize for its fierce words. To the contrary, he called Daschle an "obscenity" whose defeat would be "a political act of hygiene." It may be strange to hear the man who organized Bobbitt's 1994 national "Love Hurts" tour lecturing about obscenity and hygiene. But then, Daschle's enemies have never been burdened by an excess of shame. ■

Jeb v. the Everglades.

Sugar Plum

BY MICHAEL GRUNWALD

"I'M NOT UP on the current slang," sneered Garth Motherloving, the menacing CEO of the diabolical Motherloving Sugar Corporation. "Do the kids still say, 'Get the hell out of my office!'?" His visitor, a slender mother of three with a gravity-defying tower of blue hair, had a favor to ask first. Her husband was hopelessly addicted to junk food; her city had been named America's fattest; her local Kwik-E-Mart sold nothing but Motherloving sweets, from honey-glazed cauliflower to choco-blasted baby aspirin. So, please, couldn't the company stop putting so much sugar on everything? "Mmm, that'll boost sales!" Motherloving snarled. "While we're at it, why don't I just change my name back to Hitler?"

This is the cartoon version of Big Sugar: all-powerful and all-evil, rotting America's teeth and annihilating America's Everglades. It's an amusing caricature, but it's not really fair. Real sugar barons, unlike Motherloving in "The Simpsons," do not stand up in court and scream, "I'll kill you all! I'll kill you while you sleep!" And, while Big Sugar does pollute the Everglades, it's not the sole or even the main source of the ecosystem's decline; in fact, the industry has done an impressive job of reducing its environmental impact over the last decade. But Big Sugar, like Big Oil or Big Tobacco, has become a stock symbol of corporate greed and backroom politics, while the Everglades, once generally reviled as a pestilential swamp, has become a beloved symbol of environmental rebirth and bipartisan cooperation. Politicians don't want to be accused of carrying water for Big Sugar or messing with the Everglades.

Now, however, Florida Governor Jeb Bush has been accused of both. Big Sugar has unleashed a battalion of 46 lobbyists—including two former Florida House speakers and two former gubernatorial chiefs of staff—to push for a bill in the Florida legislature that would weaken the state's decade-old Everglades cleanup rules. And Jeb's administration, if not quite marching in lockstep with the industry, has certainly provided aid and comfort during the battle. The industry initially sought to extend the Everglades cleanup deadline by two decades, from 2006 to 2026; to increase the pollution limits by 50 percent; and to require compliance only "to the maximum extent practicable." The amended bill that Governor Bush now plans to sign is not so extreme, but it has still jeopardized the most ambitious—and perhaps the most popular—environmental project in the history of the planet, an $8 billion rescue mission for the gators, panthers, and wading birds of the long-abused River of Grass. Now congressional leaders have threatened to cut off funding, and a federal judge has called an emergency hearing.

Jeb was just reelected in November, but this fight could create an electoral nightmare for his older brother in 2004. If President Bush sides with Jeb and Big Sugar—and against some officials in his own administration, who privately describe the bill with words such as "shameful," "sinful," "an utter disaster," and "a fundamental betrayal"—he will pay a political price in the ultimate swing state. That price will skyrocket if the federal-state partnership to restore the Everglades falls apart on the watch of two Bushes, a Republican Congress, and a Republican state legislature. The Everglades plan is supported by just about every Florida interest group because it promises water-supply and flood-control goodies for farms and people as well as more natural flows for the ecosystem. Indeed, President Bush himself has already hailed the restoration plan as the ultimate example of his "new

Michael Grunwald, a WASHINGTON POST *reporter, is on leave to write a history of the Everglades.*

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environmentalism for the twenty-first century." On Tuesday, top GOP appropriators issued an extraordinary warning to Jeb, urging him to veto the "unnecessary" bill. The subtext was clear: If you sign this, we're not going to shovel billions of restoration dollars into Florida.

"This fiasco will be for the George W. Bush ticket in 2004 what Elian was for the Al Gore ticket in 2000," says Terry Rice, a former Army Corps colonel who is now a consultant for the Miccosukee Tribe. Representative Clay Shaw, a Fort Lauderdale Republican, is just as blunt: "Politically, this is just nuts." As Florida editorial boards have trashed the sugar bill—even *The New York Times* weighed in last week—Jeb has gotten increasingly testy. "Environmental politics is, like, so politically correct, so focused on perception rather than reality," he complained last week. He's got a point. But perceptions matter. And, in this case, the reality bites. The Everglades needs clean water and needs it fast.

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, there were no real water-quality standards in the Everglades. The runoff from 450,000 acres of sugarcane fields in what used to be the northern Everglades would flow south loaded with more than 300 parts per billion (ppb) of phosphorus. But the Everglades is a nutrient-starved environment, so even minute amounts of phosphorus—most scientists now put the limit at 10 ppb—can ravage the ecosystem, killing algae and making the expanses of saw grass that lend the River of Grass its nickname give way to dense stands of cattails. So, in 1988, a brash young prosecutor named Dexter Lehtinen, fresh from indicting Manuel Noriega, decided to sue Florida to force it to stop Big Sugar from polluting the Everglades. He knew the Reagan administration would not approve, so he waited until then–Vice President George H.W. Bush was attacking Michael Dukakis over the pollution in Boston Harbor, and then he filed suit without informing his bosses in the Justice Department.

The lawsuit led to a federal consent decree and eventually to the Everglades Forever Act, a compromise cleanup bill that Big Sugar essentially rammed through the Florida Legislature in 1994. At the time, many environmentalists blasted Everglades Forever as an egregious sellout to Big Sugar because it relied on unproven artificial marshes to filter out phosphorus, extended the consent decree's cleanup deadline from 2002 to 2006, and only forced the industry to cover about one-third of its $1 billion cost. But, regardless of its provenance, Everglades Forever has been a remarkable success. Big Sugar, which was required to cut its phosphorus discharges by 25 percent per year, has cut them by more than 50 percent per year. The marshes, which were supposed to reduce runoff to 50 ppb by now, are down to the low 20s. That's not yet clean enough for the Everglades, but, as far as phosphorus is concerned, it's cleaner than Evian.

In fact, while it is impossible to deny that Big Sugar harms the Everglades—not only through phosphorus discharges but by blocking the Everglades flow and slurping up Everglades water—sugar fields are one of the more benign possible uses of the industry's land and have certainly caused less damage to the Everglades than suburban sprawl. But that hasn't stopped enviros from scapegoating the mustache-twirling, bwaa-ha-ha-ing sugar barons who dump toxic waste into the swamp. "Everybody loves to make us the bad guy," says Robert Coker, an executive with U.S. Sugar, which along with Florida Crystals controls most of Florida's sugar.

Still, don't get too weepy for Big Sugar. The industry relies on a federal flood-control project, federal import quotas, and a federal price-support program that keeps domestic sugar well above the world-market price. (The General Accounting Office has estimated that the program costs American consumers as much as $1.9 billion per year.) It has showered more than $800,000 on Tallahassee politicians alone since 2001, and it's equally aggressive about using its political clout in Washington, as it demonstrated last week when it tried to get its friends to suppress a World Health Organization report advocating low-sugar diets. And who will ever forget the moment in the Starr Report when President Bill Clinton interrupted his breakup with Monica Lewinsky to take a 22-minute phone call from Alfonso Fanjul Jr., CEO of Florida Crystals?

NOW THE SUGAR brigade has stormed Tallahassee to try to muck up the Everglades Forever Act, the very cleanup bill that has worked such wonders since Big Sugar pushed it through the Florida Legislature nearly a decade ago. In addition to moving the cleanup deadline back from 2006 to 2026, the industry's bill would have weakened the phosphorus standard from 10 to 15 ppb, prevented the state from converting any more sugar fields into artificial marshes, and basically eliminated any threat of enforcement. "An absolute betrayal," says Charles Lee, an Audubon Society lobbyist who has worked on Everglades issues for 30 years.

Shaw and several other congressional leaders immediately warned that federal funding for the larger restoration might disappear if the original bill passed—on substantive grounds (because it wouldn't help to rehydrate the Everglades with dirty water), on procedural grounds (because the feds wouldn't trust the state as a partner if it thought the state was a wholly owned subsidiary of Big Sugar), and on political grounds (because many congressmen would jump at any excuse not to pour billions of dollars into a Florida swamp). Nevertheless, a state House committee approved the bill with only one dissenting vote, and a state Senate committee passed a similar bill unanimously. "The sugar industry is very good at promoting its position morning, noon, and night," says GOP Representative Porter Goss of Sanibel. "But, politically, I can't figure out why anyone else supports this. Why risk the Everglades money? Why now?"

Coker points out that Lee and other enviros who are now predicting catastrophe also predicted catastrophe back when the highly successful Everglades Forever deal was cut. "It's Chicken Little all over again," he says. Coker describes the new bill as a logical next step to make sure the cleanup doesn't get stuck in litigation if every drop of Everglades water

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doesn't reach 10 ppb by 2006. But, realistically, if Florida keeps making good progress toward pristine water quality, there's no reason to expect draconian consequences or stifling litigation if it hasn't quite achieved the 10 ppb standard in 2006. And, considering what a nice job Big Sugar has done with a gun pointed at its head, it's hard to see why anyone would want the gun removed. "This is an outrageous bailout," says Lehtinen, who is married to GOP Representative Illeana Ros-Lehtinen of Miami. "Nothing is going to happen without a hammer." On Wednesday, the federal judge overseeing the consent decree ordered all parties to the lawsuit to appear before him on May 2—and hinted that he was not happy about the latest shenanigans.

Governor Bush's administration, meanwhile, has taken some weird stances on the issue over the last few weeks. Jeb has been a fairly consistent advocate of Everglades restoration, spending billions of dollars to buy sensitive land despite his state's budget problems and steadfastly insisting on 10 ppb as a strict pollution standard. He once even told the Clinton administration that he could speed up Everglades restoration. Nonetheless, when Shaw and Goss warned that extending the deadline by 20 years would jeopardize restoration, Bush said they were misinformed and sent his environment secretary, David Struhs, to Washington to explain why. Struhs—who is White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card's brother-in-law and has been rumored as a possible candidate to replace Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Christine Todd Whitman—claims that his administration did not support the bill in its original form. That's news to other players in the debate, who speculate that Struhs must be channeling the Iraqi information minister or possibly "dropping acid."

Struhs did persuade another state Senate committee to eliminate some of the bill's more provocative language on Tuesday, including the 15 ppb shocker, and says he's now satisfied with it. "We've seen the transformation of a brown bill into a green bill," Struhs says. But enviros are still apoplectic. "[Struhs] is just spinning away," Lee complains. "He's taken sugar's side at just about every turn." On Monday, the Senate passed the bill unanimously. That's right: Not one Florida senator could be persuaded to back Big Sugar, even though House Appropriations Chairman Bill Young—of, yes, Florida—is one of the voices warning that his state is poised to shatter the broad coalition that turned the Everglades into the state's most expensive environmental priority. If Jeb signs this bill—and he has given no indication that he won't—his big brother will face a difficult quandary. "The administration does not want to piss off Florida soccer moms," one official says.

So far, President Bush's administration has stayed mostly mum about the mess in Tallahassee, although Interior Secretary Gale Norton publicly expressed "concern" about the original bill. Struhs says that EPA Regional Administrator Jimmy Palmer is "enthusiastic" about the recent improvements to the bill, and Jeb said Monday that his administration actively sought the input of federal agencies. In fact, officials at the Justice Department, Interior Department, and EPA have all told their state counterparts that the bill remains unacceptable. Many federal officials are downright furious; they just can't say so right now. "I don't know if we're being quiet because it's the president's brother or because we don't like to jump on Republican governors, but we're being quiet," one official says.

In the end, the tensions between the two Bush administrations could work to the president's advantage. It's reminiscent of an earlier controversy when Jeb, who was up for reelection, attacked his brother's administration's plan for offshore drilling in Florida. The plan was withdrawn, and Jeb looked like an environmental hero in Florida for taking on Big Oil. This time, the president is up for reelection. Maybe by taking on Big Sugar he can look like an environmental hero in Florida, too. "I hope you're right," one federal official says with a sigh. "I haven't seen any evidence yet." ■

Where are the vaccines?

Shot in the Arm

BY SHANNON BROWNLEE

TO ANYBODY WHO has followed the course of biomedical science over the last two decades, the progress being made in understanding severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) appears nothing short of miraculous. SARS emerged as a global health threat in March, and now, just two months later, scientists have isolated the virus causing the disease and published a complete map of the pathogen's genes. By comparison, the sequencing of the human genome, an admittedly larger task, has taken more than a decade. Meanwhile, a diagnostic test for SARS, which will be produced by F. Hoffmann-La Roche, Ltd., of Basel, Switzerland, could be ready in as little as six weeks, a vastly shorter amount of time than it took to develop tests for older diseases like AIDS.

The fact that the medical and biotech communities are moving so quickly on the SARS front must mean that companies are similarly hard at work on a vaccine and antiviral drugs to treat it, and we can all expect to be protected from the disease within a couple of years, right? Not exactly. While SARS is rapidly turning into a health emergency in China and could have a serious impact in a virulent form in North America, biotech and pharmaceutical companies aren't exactly elbowing each other out of the way to come up with anti-SARS products. And both the government and the marketplace itself are to blame.

Even after Tommy G. Thompson, secretary of Health and Human Services, called a meeting of 60 industry executives two weeks ago to personally ask for their help battling SARS,

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companies have been willing to appoint only small teams to look at the problem or to scour their shelves for possible antiviral compounds, which would be tried in federal laboratories. Few, if any, companies have been willing to launch a full-scale search for drugs to fight SARS.

In large part, the reason for their reticence is economic. In recent decades, the pharmaceutical industry has virtually abandoned the market for drugs designed to combat microbes such as the virus that causes SARS. Convinced that infectious disease had all but been eradicated, pharmaceutical companies stopped looking for the next penicillin in the 1970s and instead turned their attention to drugs for such chronic—and extremely profitable—conditions as hypertension, high cholesterol, depression, impotence, allergies, and baldness. As a result, by the late '80s, even as many bacterial infections were becoming resistant to existing antibiotics, there weren't many new drugs in pharmaceutical-company pipelines. Indeed, in the past 30 years, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved only one new class of antibiotic.

Yet, in recent years, the world has seen a succession of emerging infections, many coming from developing Asia and Africa, ranging from AIDS and the hantavirus to Ebola, Legionnaires' disease, and now SARS. Even ancient scourges like tuberculosis are developing resistance to existing antibiotics. Yet only in response to the AIDS epidemic have we seen new treatments come out of the drug and biotech industries. And that required a massive investment in publicly funded basic research, supported by the government, as well as private research into antivirals and vaccines, conducted by industry executives with the understanding that the market for AIDS drugs and vaccines in the developed world—where consumers can pay high prices—is enormous.

Drug companies are now scrambling to play catch-up and produce new antibiotics and antivirals, but they are not about to pursue cures for diseases like SARS on their own. Going after an emerging infectious disease demands that companies rearrange priorities, shift research funds, and even move personnel and laboratory equipment away from drugs they are currently developing. That's not a decision executives are going to make lightly without a clear sense of what the market for an ultimate product might be. When only one in 100 promising new biological or chemical entities makes it all the way to FDA approval, and companies spend between $500 and $800 million on average to get a single product to market, it should come as no surprise that investors are wary of letting drug and biotech companies waste time and money on pursuing products that might not have a market. "No company like mine can take a risk on a drug or vaccine when we have no idea what the market will be," says Una Ryan, president and chief executive of AVANT Immunotherapeutics, Inc., a vaccine company based in Needham, Massachusetts. After all, even with a crash program, a SARS vaccine might be available in one year, but antiviral drugs will take considerably longer and cost a considerable amount to develop, test for safe human use, and market.

GIVEN THE PHARMACEUTICAL industry's unwillingness to focus on infectious diseases, the government may have to step in and support research on viruses like SARS. But, though the National Institutes of Health announced this week it was stepping up research on a SARS vaccine, the Bush administration has not encouraged private-sector research. In fact, it has scared industry away by expropriating drugs from manufacturers. Two years ago, for example, companies watched aghast during the anthrax scare as Secretary Thompson obtained a rock-bottom price from German pharmaceutical giant Bayer for its antibiotic Cipro, which combats anthrax, by threatening to yank the company's patent on the drug and allowing generic manufacturers to sell it. Most bigger pharmaceutical and biotech companies have little stomach for a situation in which the government lowers profit margins in such a manner. As Sidney Taurel, the chairman and chief executive of drug giant Eli Lilly, put it in a speech on Capitol Hill last year, "Government is not going to get new miracle drugs for cost plus ten percent."

SARS is only an indicator of a wider trend. Just as the government has done little to encourage companies to research emerging viruses, so too has it failed to recognize the reality of what it will take to get drugs and vaccines to combat terrorism. In its proposed anti-bioterrorism program, Project BioShield—a plan for purchasing drugs, vaccines, and diagnostic tests for a national bioterrorism stockpile—the Bush administration would allow a company to spend several million dollars of its own money on developing a new drug or vaccine, only to see the government possibly award the contract for producing it to another company. "There is not a pharmaceutical company in the solar system that will agree to some of the terms in BioShield," says George Painter, CEO of Chimerix, Inc., a start-up that is developing a drug to treat smallpox. In addition to possibly giving away discoveries made by one company to another firm, Project BioShield excludes products that might have a commercial market outside the government bioterror stockpile. So let's say a small, struggling biotech company comes up with a new, broad-spectrum antibiotic that can fight both tularemia, a potential bioterror threat, and bacterial infections caused by a nasty bug known as staphylococcus—a product that is desperately needed by hospitals. The government specifically refuses to help the company through the research and development process, and it won't contract the company to manufacture the drug if and when it wins FDA approval. To top it off, BioShield offers companies no protection from liability should products developed with government funding cause side effects.

Why are Project BioShield and the government's response to SARS and other infectious diseases so ignorant of market factors? Blame consumer outrage over the rising cost of drugs and profits in the pharmaceutical industry. As one government official put it, "The last thing the administration wants to do is look like they're giving a windfall to the pharmaceutical industry at a time when we're talking about drug prices."

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TO BE SURE, there are plenty of reasons to criticize the pharmaceutical industry, including its accounting and pricing practices, its army of lobbyists, and its willingness to devote a huge percentage of its budget to marketing (see Arnold S. Relman and Marcia Angell, "America's Other Drug Problem," December 16, 2002). But, for all their faults, the biotech and pharmaceutical industries are still the nation's best—and only—hope for producing drugs and vaccines needed to battle emerging diseases and bioterror threats. If we are serious about being prepared, we will have to play by the market's rules. ■

Beijing Dispatch

Breath Test

BY JASPER BECKER

THIS PAST WEEK, on Beijing's roads, travelers saw images straight out of the 1950s. On streets where only a month ago the Chinese could travel largely unhindered, police checked cars to make sure people with severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) symptoms did not leave the city. I myself saw men and women with red handkerchiefs tied around their arms carrying wooden staffs. They were members of neighborhood committees responsible, in a government-mandated campaign reminiscent of the past, for patrolling, inspecting, snooping, and reporting on their fellow citizens to ensure full compliance with the regime's SARS orders.

As they patrol, the police and the red-kerchiefed men and women are doing more than simply protecting China from sinking deeper into the SARS epidemic that has spread across the country. They are signaling that, faced with perhaps its most serious crisis since 1989, the Communist leadership is not, as some foreign observers have suggested, becoming more transparent. In fact, the Beijing regime actually is falling back upon old-style campaigns of propaganda and control.

Over the past month, as the true extent of the SARS epidemic has become clear, some Western publications have expressed the hope that the disease will prompt the Chinese government to open up. After the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) fired two well-known officials, Beijing Mayor Meng Xuenong and Health Minister Zhang Wenkang, last month for covering up SARS, *The Economist* ran a cover story titled "THE SARS VIRUS: COULD IT BECOME CHINA'S CHERNOBYL?" in which its editors predicted that the disease could lead to increased transparency and public accountability. "A health scare may herald much more profound changes," the magazine noted.

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But those predictions are likely mistaken. Unlike the 1989 Tiananmen uprising, which led to a split between hard-liners and moderates in the upper echelons of the party, SARS probably will not lead to a schism. Chinese President Hu Jintao and his peers in government cut their political teeth during the 1989 protests. Accordingly, they have developed a fear of any opening that might decrease Beijing's power: In the past four years, even as China has opened some segments of its economy, they have cracked down hard on groups such as Falun Gong that the regime perceives as threatening the party's primacy. The reformers, who in the late '80s had advocated the removal of direct party control of institutions such as newspapers, hospitals, and universities, no longer hold positions of power.

The party also has maintained tight control of the media during the SARS crisis, using the press as an old-style propaganda organ. Though Meng and Zhang were fired, the regime has effectively prevented the media from reporting the true spread of SARS. In contrast to the temporary glasnost of 1989, the media have little latitude to express independence from the party. When one doctor in Beijing, Jiang Yanyong, tried to reveal this spring how quickly SARS was spreading, state television refused to put his story on the air.

In fact, the Chinese press has in the wake of SARS been recycling stock phrases that hail the heroism of top leaders and the selfless devotion of the medical-research laboratories of the army, a bastion of support for the party. To take one example, *People's Daily* covered an April visit by Hu Jintao to Guangdong, the province where SARS allegedly originated, by saying, "Hu, as the highest state leader who personally went to Guangdong, . . . has set an example . . . of cordiality and affection for the people" and of the leadership ability he shows in handling the crisis.

The press also has been highlighting the strength of China's scientific resources, which it touts as crucial to handling SARS. The CCP has long emphasized its leaders' commands of science and technology; in the '50s, for example, the party constantly highlighted the "scientific" nature of its poorly devised agricultural policies. Unlike in most countries, where lawyers or diplomats rise to power, in China top officials are now mostly trained as engineers.

Beijing is emphasizing its supposed command of science to convince the public that the party is well-equipped to handle SARS. In the past, the party led large-scale "patriotic" public-sanitation campaigns that virtually wiped out syphilis, leprosy, and other diseases in the '50s and '60s, as well as successful inoculation drives against smallpox, typhoid, diphtheria, and other killers. The message is clear: Only party control can wipe out SARS.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS been supporting its propaganda with "patriotic" mass-mobilization campaigns similar to those in the '50s, as well as with control of professional organizations. The regime is portraying its efforts to combat the disease as a quasi-military campaign in which citizens are required to "sacrifice" themselves to the national interest: Nurses become heroic "fighters" on the front line, and the goal is "victory" over SARS.

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Meanwhile, it has utilized its domination of professional organizations to prevent professionals, such as doctors, from turning against the party—by revealing more details about SARS cases to the foreign media or other outsiders, for example. Every hospital, company, and other large institution contains party officials—officials who, since SARS broke, can quash anti-government rumblings.

The party's efforts to keep control seem to be working. In sharp contrast to the closure of state enterprises, which have resulted in massive protests in many areas of China in recent years, the fear of contracting SARS has prompted the public to simply stay indoors. In fact, people have cooperated with the government's anti-SARS measures despite the increased restrictions on civil liberties.

Ultimately, SARS is unlikely to prompt more than a miniscule opening from the Chinese government. Some Chinese officials have suggested in recent days that SARS will force them to become more cooperative with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international bodies in the future. Yet the officials stop short of suggesting that the WHO would be allowed to set up health-monitoring groups in China separate from party-controlled professional organizations.

Speaking before a group of Asian officials about SARS this week, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao assured the audience that the party had learned its lesson from the disease. And it has. It's just not the lesson outsiders would like it to learn. ■

What the WHO should have learned from the flu.

Oversight

BY SIDDHARTHA MUKHERJEE

With a little bit of training—and a few peanuts—a monkey could probably learn to give a flu shot. It is a breathtakingly anti-climactic process: You pick up a syringe prefilled with a droplet of the inoculum, flick the bubbles out, then jab the contents into the shoulder of a patient. The procedure takes just seconds, requires almost no dexterity, and demonstrates no particular skills. It is, in short, one of the least complicated tasks in all of medicine—and perhaps the least glamorous. No one ever gets a flu shot on "ER."

But it's what *precedes* that pinprick that makes flu vaccinations one of the most complex of all human activities. To start with, the virus itself is infernal. Influenza—unlike, say, hepatitis B or smallpox—mutates at a furious pace every year. As a result, the vaccine, like a fussy piece of clothing, needs to be refitted each time to match its target. That, in turn, demands an astonishing international infrastructure—110 National Influenza Centers spread across 83 countries—to keep track of emerging strains of the flu. The influenza vaccine is thus built on a notion of perpetual vigilance—a concept called "integrated surveillance"—that involves laboratories, physicians, scientists, and field workers all over the world.

That phrase, integrated surveillance, is worth remembering because it went globally missing this year. Between November and April, as the lethal respiratory illness called SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) brewed furtively in Guangdong Province, public health experts outside China remained completely oblivious to the looming threat. The Chinese government obviously played a major role in suppressing the news: At least 305 cases were documented between November and February in Guangdong and neighboring provinces without any alarms being activated. But the unfortunate truth is that no one was really listening for alarms: The World Health Organization (WHO), the agency most likely to have heard them, had no functional surveillance program for emerging diseases in place.

The irony is that the blueprint for such a surveillance system was staring the WHO in the face. The organization's influenza program and its similarly structured international anti-polio effort have both been humming away since the 1950s. Between November and April, flu centers and polio centers all over the world—in Ankara and Mumbai and Atlanta—continued to log in data with meticulous precision. The influenza Web server, called *Flunet*, registered thousands of reports from these centers and made detailed predictions about this year's flu epidemic. In other words, the tools needed to design a more general surveillance system—something that could have caught SARS early—were already in place. But, for all their success against polio and the flu, these tools had not yet been applied to the possibility of other emerging diseases. And, by the time the alarm bells started ringing at the WHO, it was too late.

The idea of a broader system of integrated surveillance—that *someone* should be actively trawling the world looking for emerging infectious diseases—isn't new. In 1994, nearly a decade before SARS, medical writer Laurie Garrett made a strong case for such a network. Garrett's book *The Coming Plague* analyzed 14 newly emerging infectious diseases—Ebola, Legionnaires'

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The global system that tracks, and contains, the flu could have served as a model for stopping SARS.

disease, and HIV among them. Near the end of her 700-page tome, in a chapter subtitled "Preparedness, Surveillance, and the New Understanding," Garrett argued that, while looking for *known* diseases, such as influenza or polio, was an essential part of the public health agenda, it was unlikely to be enough. "If a novel epidemic appeared," Garrett asked, "was the international public health community prepared to handle" it? Garrett concluded emphatically that it wasn't and that a network designed to capture the outbreak of such novel diseases was desperately needed.

In January 2000, these arguments began to register within the WHO. In an article in *Weekly Epidemiological Record* (the WHO's international bulletin), the authors seconded Garrett's proposal, pointedly noting that a global surveillance service for "emerging" diseases was clearly missing. "Effective communicable diseases control relies on effective response systems," the piece noted, "and effective response systems rely on effective disease surveillance." The article demolished any hope that current systems of vigilance, such as those implemented by national governments, would have any effect. "Some are effective," the authors concluded, but others "have lost momentum, are poorly maintained or have virtually collapsed." What the *Record* piece proposed instead was a "paradigm shift" in disease surveillance. And the authors made three concrete suggestions that, in retrospect, could have had a profound impact on the SARS outbreak.

The first idea was that, like the anti-flu and anti-polio efforts, a system for combating emerging diseases should be "integrated" (i.e., centralized) so doctors in disparate parts of the globe—Mongolia and Madagascar, say—could watch out for clusters of disease and warn each other of impending epidemics.

In January 2000—ironically, the very month that the *Record* made its case for global surveillance—the success of the influenza survey system was put on full display in Europe and the United States. By mid-January that year, Europe had already begun to reel under the threat of a severe influenza epidemic. Between October 1999 and February 2000, the WHO (collaborating with the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme) pooled data from nearly 700,000 patients in England, 305,000 in Portugal, and 112,371 in Spain. Flu-watchers surveyed 3,500 general practitioners in the Czech Republic, 550 in Germany, and 376 in France. All in all, data from well over one million patients in eleven countries was meticulously entered and analyzed. Doctors, field workers, and scientists were mobilized. Swabs were shipped off to the influenza centers, the virus was genotyped, and laboratories briskly started working on a new vaccine for the coming winter.

At first glance, the findings of the group seemed predictable enough: The major strain of influenza circulating through Europe, called H3N2, was an old and familiar culprit. H3N2 had been active in the United States for the last five flu seasons, and its reemergence in Europe was no surprise. But hidden within the larger European epidemic was a rarer, more sporadic strain of influenza, a virus called H1N1. Such mutational gymnastics—a flu buried within a flu—are precisely the sort of thing the influenza network was designed to thwart. As a result of the discovery, in March 2000, the WHO's recommendation for the North American vaccine for 2000–2001 was a "mixture" comprising H3N2 and H1N1 and a third, even rarer strain of the flu that had been circulating in Asia.

That winter, the fear of a lethal influenza epidemic gripped Boston. In a windowless clinic on the sixth floor of my hospital, I spent several mornings giving patients the newest version of flu vaccine. Elderly men and women nearly clogged the hospital corridors every morning waiting for their flu shot. And, true to form, on December 5, 2000, the first case of influenza was suddenly upon us: A five-year-old child was diagnosed with a mild case in Boston. From that day onward, there was a steady rise in cases. The flu hovered tentatively over Boston and New York, threatening to overwhelm hospital emergency rooms and wards. At least two of my patients—an 80-year-old woman from South Boston and a middle-aged man who smoked incessantly—almost died from it.

And then, all of a sudden, it was gone. When the flu strain for the sick five-year-old, along with thousands of subsequent cases, was analyzed and genotyped, it turned out to be H1N1, the rarer strain that the WHO had included in its recommended vaccine for that year. It's hard to know whether the U.S. flu was milder than the European flu because of the prescient choice of that vaccine. But what influenza 2000 *did* prove, once again, was that the surveillance system "worked,"

ANASTASIA VASILAKIS

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that it was extremely efficient in identifying circulating viruses long before they could unleash deadly epidemics.

BUT ALL THIS seems easy enough to do with the flu. Influenza, like polio, is a well-defined disease, with its own lab tests and diagnostic criteria. In the case of SARS, however, there was no well-defined disease to start with. Even medical journals were initially baffled by the illness. How then could the WHO have created a "surveillance system" for a disease that hadn't even been named?

The *Record* piece addressed this problem with its second suggestion. The trouble with the old systems, the authors argued, was that they were only mechanisms of recording *known* diseases. What was needed was a method by which the WHO could catch any disease that might emerge within a finger's reach of one of its survey centers. What the WHO needed was not only an integrated system but also a new way of recording data on diseases.

In mid-April, a few weeks into the SARS crisis, I asked Cyrus Hopkins, an infectious-disease expert at Massachusetts General Hospital, whether a global surveillance system could possibly capture a hitherto unknown disease. Hopkins is a tall, 60-something physician with a shock of white hair and a perpetual open-toothed smile. During his tenure as a doctor, he has hunted down malaria in Pakistan and run anthrax simulations for the U.S. government. If anyone knew the frustrations of disease surveillance, I imagined, it would be Hopkins.

Hopkins's answer to the problem turned out to be another throwback to the early days of mass vaccinations. "Those polio experts knew about this problem all along," he said. "Way back when, in the 1960s or so, they had figured out a system. They switched to recording syndromes instead of diseases. That way, the field doctors could just describe what they had seen—and the rest could be left to the labs."

It is a brilliantly simple approach—and, again, one that has been used with the flu. For the WHO's influenza tracking system, doctors need only report a cluster of symptoms—fevers, muscle pain, breathing troubles, and so on—that would classify a disease as an ILI, or an influenza-like illness. Swabs from ILIs are sent off to a centralized site and further characterized there. By the early '80s, the flu-watchers had become even more crafty: They began to track rises in visits to general practitioners as the earliest marker for an impending influenza outbreak. This process—of initially charting a disease through its telltale signs and symptoms, rather than laboratory tests or confirmed diagnoses—even has its own moniker: "syndromic" monitoring.

Could syndromic monitoring have picked up SARS? There's good reason to think that it might have. Even if doctors often don't know what to *call* a new illness, they generally do know when something is deeply wrong. In San Francisco in the mid-'80s—long before HIV had a name—doctors began to suspect that something wasn't quite right with the bizarre infections that were sprouting up among gay men. So, too, with SARS: On February 21, Dr. Liu Jianlun, a lung specialist from Zhongshan Hospital, checked himself into a Hong Kong hospital with fever, chills, and labored breathing. Jianlun didn't know exactly what was wrong with him, but he knew that it wasn't simply any old pneumonia. As a result, Jianlun advised doctors and nurses to put on masks and gloves when they examined him. His instinct proved right: Within a week, the lung doctor was dead from SARS, the first such case to be described in Hong Kong.

That instinct is one of the most fundamental—and powerful—in all of medicine. Stripped of all its complex technical content, medicine is frequently made up of such instincts, gut feelings that allow doctors to distinguish the normal from the abnormal, to listen for subtle signals in the noise, to look for patterns within scattered points. It is gossip mixed with wisdom, dressed up in a white coat.

If syndromic monitoring is so effective, why didn't the WHO use the concept for other diseases much earlier? Because monitoring syndromes can be a frustrating and expensive business. It was deployed so effectively against polio because polio causes unique symptoms: Not many diseases cause "acute flaccid paralysis," the syndrome characteristically associated with it. If doctors had to report every single outbreak of respiratory illnesses, however—if every cough and sneeze foreboded a deadly epidemic—the WHO would soon be drowning in data. Over the course of the winter, tens of thousands of such cases check into hospitals around the world every week; only the tiniest fraction of these will end up being diseases worth monitoring.

But, whatever the general problems with this approach, it could have worked quite well for SARS. The SARS "syndrome," after all, wasn't subtle: Doctors in Guangdong and Hong Kong knew there was something odd about the hundreds of patients with aggressive, multifocal pneumonias who suddenly seemed to drop dead in their intensive care units. The gossip and wisdom that these findings must have generated was certainly suppressed by the Chinese government. But, had an animated, pervasive syndromic-monitoring unit been on the lookout, it might have registered unusual death notices in Guangdong or even picked up rumors from hospitals in Beijing. These hazy forebodings might have tipped off public health officials around the world. And, if international authorities had known about SARS a month earlier, they might have issued a quarantine in and around Guangdong Province and warned health care workers about the potential risks. That, in turn, might have prevented the epidemic's spread to faraway nations, such as Singapore, Australia, and Canada.

THE THIRD AND final point made by the *Record* piece was perhaps the thorniest: Because local surveillance authorities were already moribund, it was time to replace them with more efficient, international systems.

The failure of local networks to relay information adequately became apparent in the course of the SARS crisis. Early this year, as new cases of pneumonia began to mushroom in Shunde and Heyuan, local hospitals tried desperately to convince Guangdong authorities that a new disease was on the loose. But no health alert was issued. As *The New York Times* pointed out last week, "It was unclear whether [the] conclu-

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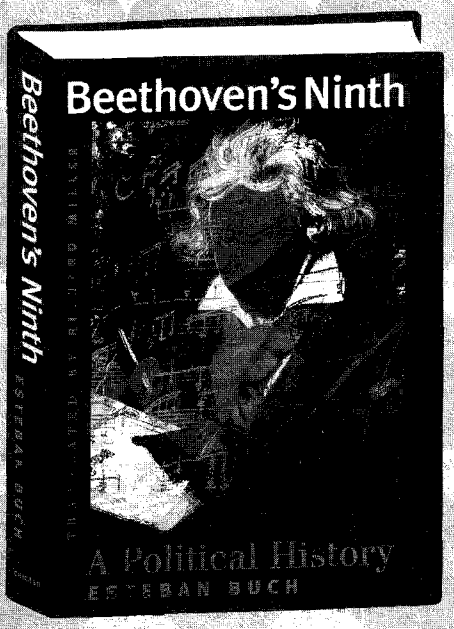
sion was passed on by provincial officials to the Ministry of Health." In other words, SARS proved a principle of epidemiology that Hopkins had referred to during his conversation with me: Local *knowledge* is often plentiful; it's local surveillance that is often missing.

Converting knowledge into surveillance obviously requires political support. And a key question is whether secretive and imperious governments, such as China's, will ever allow the WHO to create permanent outposts within their borders. Part of the answer, again, lies in the influenza experience. So far, the Chinese government has allowed two influenza centers (in Beijing and in Hong Kong) to exist for more than a decade without much resistance. That may have been driven by self-interest: Like SARS, influenza has a disproportionate effect on China. And the economic and political burdens of both epidemics are likely to presage important changes for the future. Amir Attaran, a public health specialist who studies international public health at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, certainly hopes this will happen. "It always comes down to the economic pinch," he told me. "The impact of large epidemics, such as HIV, is denied by governments at first." He added: "It wouldn't be surprising if SARS took out 0.5 percent of the Chinese growth rate for this year. *That* would certainly make them sit up and pay attention."

That economic pinch, if it gets severe enough, might create a unique opportunity for the WHO to peddle its plans for a global surveillance network to wealthy governments. Like influenza, but unlike most infectious diseases, SARS has found its way into developed nations such as Canada, Australia, and the United States. And that, in turn, might persuade these nations to pitch in some money toward a global surveillance effort that would be otherwise difficult to fund. To some extent, this effort could use the infrastructure already created by the influenza network. Some of the resources used so effectively by the flu-watchers—records of visits to general practitioners, access to hospital databases, a powerful Web server tended by hundreds of epidemiologists—could even be adopted by the surveillance network.

If the political will and financial support can be mustered through international campaigns, then the onus would shift to the WHO. And, to be fair, the organization has been moving in this direction already: Between 2000 and 2003, it piloted eight projects in Africa focusing on disease surveillance. These projects were tiny compared with the influenza or polio efforts. But the point is that these projects don't need to be "pilots" for very long: A functional and successful model for surveillance already exists, and it has already had a powerful impact on other major human epidemics. It is probably a good rule of public health that those who ignore the history of old epidemics are cursed to repeat them. Before SARS, ignoring that axiom might have been shortsighted. After this winter's experience, ignoring it will be unconscionable. ■

"An astonishing book."*



BEETHOVEN'S NINTH
A Political History
ESTEBAN BUCH
TRANSLATED BY RICHARD MILLER

"Buch's Beethoven is a different musician from the tortured genius of historical imagination, and his rethinking of the Beethoven myth has important implications for the Ninth Symphony. . . . Buch convincingly demonstrates how the growth of Beethoven's posthumous reputation as the musical embodiment of genius and humanism is paralleled by the development of European identity, surviving—as Richard Wagner did not—its association with the Third Reich. . . . In examining the symbiotic relationship between music and politics, Mr. Buch offers a new view of the convoluted route by which the composer's music, and the Ninth Symphony in particular, came to form the soundtrack of the aspirations of the European dream."—*Economist*

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Different Depths

OKSANA AKINSHINA IS NOT an easy name to remember, but I hope this becomes necessary. She is a young Russian actress now in the title role of **LILYA 4-EVER,** who had done some previous film work but with no particular renown. The director of this new picture says that he simply selected her out of a group of applicants, adding, "You have to trust your instincts because you can't really say why you choose a specific person." A low bow, then, to his instincts, because Akinshina is not only excellent in his film, she *is* the film in any substantive sense.

LILYA 4-EVER
(Newmarket)

HOUSE OF FOOLS
(Paramount Classics)

That director was Lukas Moodysson, the Swede whose previous film, *Together,* followed the detrition of a commune in Stockholm. Once again he has written his own screenplay, which, though it begins and ends in Sweden, takes place mostly in an unidentified city in the former Soviet Union. Elsewhere we can learn that this city is Tallinn in Estonia. Nowadays Russians are disliked in liberated Estonia, which makes it the perfect setting for this story.

The picture opens on a highway overpass in Sweden; then a title tells us that we are going back three months to the former USSR. Lilya, sixteen, living in a dreary apartment project, is elated because she expects to move with her mother and her mom's boyfriend to America. The mother soon crushes Lilya's expectation, abandons her, walks out on the daughter's tears and pleadings. An aunt is to take care of the girl. The aunt, old and sick, is interested only enough to find Lilya a smaller apartment, dismal.

Lilya is supposed to be going to school, but her emotional bruising and her poverty intervene. Her only real friend is a boy of about twelve, Volodya, who is devoted to her. Broke, Lilya follows a schoolmate's example and turns a few tricks as a hooker. Dejected and repulsed, she is walking home one night through lonely streets when a pleasant young man in a car befriends her. He doesn't pick her up with the usual intent; he simply wants to help her.

In time she falls in love with him, especially because he doesn't try to sleep with her. He is Russian, too, and is on holiday from a job in Sweden. He offers to take her back to Sweden with him: more, he phones his boss and arranges a job for her in the place where he works. Volodya, who is homeless, begs her to take him along. Much as she loves him, she cannot. (After she leaves, the boy kills himself.) On the way to the airport Lilya's boyfriend says he will put her on the plane but must stay two days more to visit his grandmother. His boss will meet her in Sweden.

The boss does meet her, and takes her to an apartment, where he locks her in. There, and on expeditions to other apartments, he sells her sexual services. The boss tells Lilya that if she tries to get away he will kill her: if she goes to the police, they will send her back home, where the boyfriend will kill her. She does manage to escape and at the last is on that highway overpass, now attended by the fantasized Volodya, who is faithful even in the afterlife, unchanged except that he now wears a pair of patently false wings. He implores her to join him in heaven.

I have sketched the story to underscore, indirectly, how remarkable Akinshina is, because the story is not. In its first setting it is just one more account of juvenile delinquency brought on by parental neglect and the nastiness of an environment. Then it shifts to an account of abduction, which is nothing more than an unresonant instance of crime. Moodysson, as author, adds nothing to either subject. As director, however, he has found a luminous Lilya.

It is Akinshina's presence and performance that make the pedestrian story heartwrenching. She is pretty, responsive, reflective. Without the slightest strain, she convinces us of the beauty and pathos and hope within Lilya. Whatever the film implies about Lilya, Akinshina makes instantly true, deepens with her instinct for the selfhood of the girl. At one early point Lilya, desperate and stubborn, is seated on a bench in a courtyard and carves in it the credo "Lilya 4-Ever." This not only tells us that she knows some English—and can play with it a little—it proclaims her intent to survive.

Moodysson, who directs cleanly and concisely, must have had much to do with Akinshina's performance, but there is no trace of puppetry in her. She radiates. The film might have seemed exploitative of the troubles it depicts, a bit facile in its reliance on a series of grim events without any ultimate thematic purpose. But Akinshina makes us glad that we can see Lilya. She even convinces us that Volodya's dream appearance toward the end is truly Lilya's fantasy. I will try hard to remember Akinshina's name and will hope for reasons to be glad that I did.

Russians again. Peculiarly, the most unusual aspect of a Russian film called **HOUSE OF FOOLS** is that it exists. The basic situation in the screenplay is the invasion of Chechnya in 1996—an unexpected subject for a Russian picture, particularly from a non-supportive view. The well-known Andrei Konchalovsky, who wrote and directed, says that he showed the screenplay to a KGB officer who "added some remarks that I took into account." No doubt. Konchalovsky had to find his financing in France; still he made the film with a Russian cast and crew.

These facts are remarkable, but the resulting film is, alas, a disaster. The setting is a mental hospital near the Russian-Chechen border. The picture deals with the effect of the Russian invasion on the hospital inmates. The screenplay tries so hard to be symbolic and the acting is so callously grotesque that the film very soon becomes a burlesque of its ghastly subject. For much of the time the patients are left without the doctor of the place, who has gone off to find buses to take his patients elsewhere, and during that time the patients are more

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or less on their own. But there is no "their" there. Each one is an individualized psychotic, twisted in mind and body.

The one faintly normal person is a young woman who believes that an English pop singer loves her and is coming for her. All the others are raving cases. It is sobering to be reminded that such people exist in the thousands around the globe and that war must be a special anguish for them. But implicit in this picture is too much ego, a discomfiting self-satisfaction. Most of these people are actors who seem to relish the chance to perform crazily.

Even more suspect is Konchalovsky. In Russia this experienced director did, among others, an *Uncle Vanya* and *Siberiade,* both notable. He has also made several pictures in America, including the forceful *Runaway Train.* But his plunge into the world of mental distortion is so garish, so exploitative, that the picture needs only a few clicks of the dial to move from the horrible to the ludicrous. The only possible salvage of this mess would have been not to darken the seriousness but to call in Woody Allen. ■

Jerome Groopman
Prescriptions

PROTECTING AMERICA'S HEALTH: THE FDA, BUSINESS, AND ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF REGULATION
By Philip J. Hilts
(Alfred A. Knopf, 378 pp., $26.95)

IN 1990, I WAS APPOINTED TO chair the Food and Drug Administration's Advisory Committee on Biological Response Modifiers, known as BRMs. BRMs were among the first products of America's burgeoning biotech industry, and they were closely watched not only by the clinical community but also by Wall Street. Our initial meeting was convened to evaluate a protein called interleukin-2 that potently stimulates the body's T cells. Dr. Steven Rosenberg of the National Cancer Institute had pioneered the use of interleukin-2 as an immune booster against cancer. Our specific charge was to assess the safety and the efficacy of this protein as a therapy for kidney cancer. The biotech company developing interleukin-2, Cetus, was based in California. The fortunes of the company seemed to be riding on the approval of this product.

Reams of documents were sent out to the members of my committee prior to our public deliberations. As I waded through the hundreds of pages detailing Cetus's laboratory and clinical studies of interleukin-2, it became clear that this was not going to be a simple judgment. At the doses given in the experimental trials, interleukin-2 often caused life-threatening pulmonary and cardiac side effects that necessitated hospitalization in the intensive care unit. Moreover, the evidence for regression of cancer in these patients was scant. There were a handful of positive outcomes, amounting to a few percent of the total cases treated. Standard treatments for metastatic kidney cancer included a chemotherapy drug called Vinblastine and a hormone called Megace. Neither was particularly effective, but each was markedly less toxic than interleukin-2.

To complicate matters, the clinical data on these standard therapies were largely historical: there was no prospective randomized study comparing Megace or Vinblastine (or a combination of the two) with a placebo control or with interleukin-2. Equally vexing, kidney cancer can follow a highly variable course, with some tumors growing rapidly and causing death within months and others behaving in a much less aggressive manner. This made it difficult to establish whether the anecdotes of response to interleukin-2 were a clear advance over standard therapy, or which subset of the larger population with the cancer might most appropriately be treated.

The advisory committee sat before a large audience, like a panel of judges hearing a case in a courtroom. Yet there was a significant difference: our role was to make recommendations to the FDA, and it was the FDA that made the final decision about whether the experimental therapy would be approved or not. Still, our advice carried great weight. At the front of the audience

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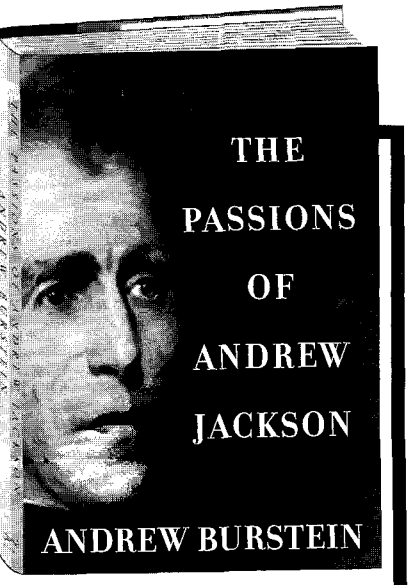

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sat representatives from the Cetus corporation. In addition to their presentations on the study data, we would hear from a patient with kidney cancer who was a member of an advocacy group pressing to have the therapy approved. Behind these presenters was a large group numbering in the hundreds. Some were journalists covering the hearing; many were stock analysts whose firms had placed bets on our vote.

Cetus introduced its data on interleukin-2 treatment, and then the patient with kidney cancer pleaded for approval, decrying how little there was to do for the disease and arguing that desperate disorders necessitated desperate measures. His plaintive presentation was all too familiar to me and to the other members of the advisory committee. We were all, at one time or another, clinicians struggling to find a way to retard the rampant spread of an aggressive tumor. But we were also acutely aware of how much harm we could do with our treatments, how the remaining time for such cancer patients could be truncated by the toxicities of the therapy. Not infrequently, after we prescribed such debilitating drugs, we stood at the bedside wondering whether we had really done what was best for our patients.

Following testimony from Cetus and the patient, representatives from the FDA dissected the results of the clinical trials. It was not a pretty picture. The design and the execution of the studies did not clearly show what was an optimal dose of interleukin-2 to achieve a benefit, or indeed if any significant benefit resulted from the therapy. As the company set forth its rebuttal, members of the committee probed more deeply with pointed questions. The journalists in the audience scribbled furiously. The stock analysts ran in and out of the auditorium to call their investment houses. I later learned that the share prices of Cetus fluctuated wildly with the tone and the content of the debate. Commerce was driving the discourse as strongly as science.

All of us on the committee wanted a good new drug against kidney cancer. We fully grasped the financial stakes, but we focused on the data before us. After more than eight hours of agonizing discussion, the committee voted to recommend that the FDA not approve interleukin-2. Rather, we instructed the Cetus corporation to work closely with the agency to identify an optimal and safe dose for a patient group that might truly benefit from it. Some in the audience saw this as a triumph of science and a prudent position that had not bent to commercial pressures. Others could hardly contain their anger, claiming that once again a cold-hearted bureaucracy had prevailed. Wall Street punished the company; its shares plummeted.

Like most medical researchers and clinicians, I joined the advisory committee with mixed feelings about the FDA. I was suspicious that the agency was an ossified organization. I learned through the interleukin-2 deliberation that this view was simplistic. The position of having to weigh the risks and the benefits of a toxic therapy for a terrible disease was not a comfortable or easy perch. I clung to a single consolation after the negative vote: that because of prior pressure from AIDS activists, mechanisms had been forced upon the FDA to allow patients with life-threatening diseases to have access to drugs still in experimental testing—if their physicians agreed and if the company was willing to provide the drug at no cost. This so-called "compassionate use" had worked well during the months before the formal approval of AZT. A compassionate-use program had also been instituted by Cetus in anticipation of approval of interleukin-2. While that approval had not been granted, patients still could receive the therapy on an individual basis until the company was able to organize sufficient data to demonstrate convincingly the safety and the efficacy of the treatment. That took place about a year later, and interleukin-2 was then approved as a treatment for kidney cancer.

PHILIP J. HILTS'S BOOK forcefully captures the complexity and the drama of the government's attempt to oversee the imperfect science of medical treatment. It is a genuinely important book, rich in history, accurate in detail, unflinching in analysis. Above all, it causes us to think differently about the FDA, which has so often served as a convenient whipping boy for frustrated constituencies across the political spectrum. As I read Hilts's book, I understood how far the agency had come to enable our committee to soberly evaluate drugs like interleukin-2. I also learned of the deficiencies in the workings of the agency, and what needs to be done to close the gaps in current law.

Hilts traces a tense arc, each chapter profiling a personality and a period that were linked to a fundamental change in the functioning of the FDA. These are nuanced portraits. He begins with Harvey Washington Wiley, one of the first federal regulators of food and drugs, who predated the agency. Wiley was a fiercely independent chemist from Indiana, a Union soldier in the Civil War, an apprentice to a country doctor in Kentucky, and ultimately the head of the science department at Purdue University. An enthusiast for the scientific method, he analyzed the composition of everything from wood to water. In 1883, Wiley joined the Department of Agriculture as its chief chemist. He believed that there was a fundamental similarity between science and business: both should be free and unfettered, so as to allow competition. But Wiley recognized one critical difference between the two enterprises. As Hilts observes,

> What bothered Wiley, who loved both research and commerce, and participated in both throughout his life, was that in research there was a strong sanction against deceit, while in commerce deceit seemed to be an accepted tactic to achieve profits. There was some disjoint here. Wiley could not understand deception about food and drugs, substances that to him were sacramental. They were nature's chemistry. How could one corrupt what was produced by God and nature, and needed for life by humans?

It was the pursuit of this question that brought Wiley to apply his keen experimental acumen to what were called patent medicines. Their name derived from the patent or proprietary nature of the formulas, which were held in secret. Marketing for these putative medications, which had names such as the Grand Restorative, the Universal Vegetable Pill, and Wheeler's Nerve Vitalizer, occupied a large fraction of the nation's advertising budget. So formidable forces confronted Wiley in his effort to regulate patent medicines. Time and again bills introduced in Congress were defeated by the Republican leadership, particularly Nelson W. Aldrich of Rhode Island, who was a grocery wholesaler and had close ties with the baking powder and chemical industries.

It was Theodore Roosevelt who set out to civilize capitalism in the marketplace of food and drugs. Like many in the Republican Party and in his social class, Roosevelt began as a laissez-faire advocate who opposed governmental meddling in most corners of the public realm. But Samuel Gompers succeeded in opening his eyes. As a young state legislator, Roosevelt was invited by Gompers to witness the deep misery of Manhattan's tenements. There was something inherently wrong, Roosevelt concluded, in how the poor and the vulnerable were blithely exploited by the rich

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and the powerful. Seeing himself as a combative man of action, Roosevelt decided that unregulated capitalism was really a form of bullying. "This became a principle for Roosevelt in many affairs of government: free commerce was essential, but it would come to nothing, worse than nothing, if the rules of enterprise favored one group and bullied another," Hilts writes. "Roosevelt liked to speak of the nation in a grand way, as if it had a single character, which he wanted to shape. He came to feel that not only enterprise but also fairness was required if toughness of spirit was not to slacken into laziness or arrogance. Roosevelt, an enthusiast of business and an admirer of progress, feared that the streak of unfairness he sometimes saw displayed in nineteenth-century capitalism, in its harshness and self-concern, would be the unmaking of the whole American enterprise."

Roosevelt carried this sensibility into his presidency. Upton Sinclair's novel *The Jungle* had stirred the nation like no other exposé before it, and the book furnished Roosevelt with the ammunition that he needed to cut down his opponents. He battled to pass the Pure Food and Drug Act in Congress, and finally, in 1902 and 1906, the bills reached his desk. These legislative milestones led to the creation of the FDA. Still, as Hilts emphasizes, the initial legislation had numerous loopholes, necessitating some forty additional laws that gradually gave the agency more duties and more powers.

HILTS'S ABSORBING NARRATIVE is a long documentation of the grim fact that mendacity and greed have never left the food and drug industries. Each president since Roosevelt was forced to balance the powerful interests of business with the public welfare, at least until the thalidomide debacle in 1959—a catastrophe of unparalleled proportion—finally fixed clinical science as the centerpiece of federal regulation. Prior to that disaster, drug companies could test experimental therapies by simply sending them out to doctors for use, without organized clinical trials comparing the drug with a placebo or standard therapy. All of this distribution occurred before any formal approval for sale. Moreover, the requirements to report to the FDA on the safety of the drugs were meager. "When a company submitted its application to put a drug on the market," Hilts writes,

> there were no rules. The companies had no particular scientific or medical

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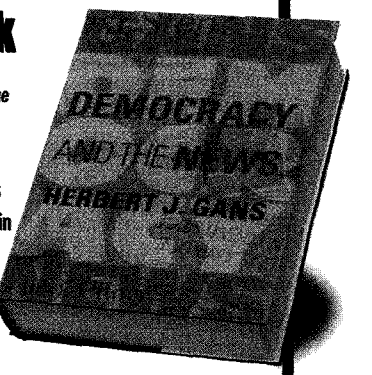

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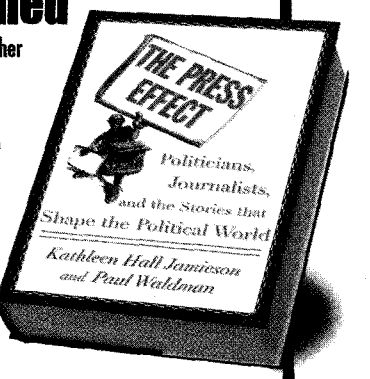
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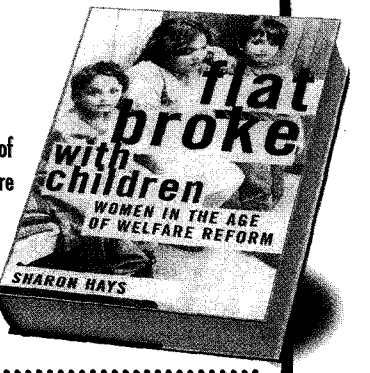

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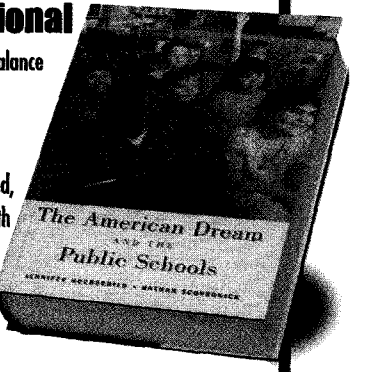

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guidance from the FDA about what evidence was required to show a drug safe and effective. Drugs were often given to humans before they were tested on animals; there were no rules against it, and for a long time the FDA did not object. When things went wrong with the drugs, the FDA was often the last to know, and the slowest to act when it did know. There was a fear within the FDA of acting against the companies' wishes. So the agency made some special effort to work, like cleaner fish on the sides of the companies, without disturbing the great-toothed creatures. Even when reports of seriously toxic drugs were given to the FDA, they were not made public by the agency because the companies requested it. In one case, scientists from NIH starting tests of a heart drug asked the FDA for information in its files about how toxic the drug was; the FDA refused to send it over. Moreover, in the 1950s and early 1960s the FDA was not a brilliant keeper of records. It did not know all the drugs on the market, or what was happening with them.

This radically changed when Dr. Frances Kelsey, a shy forty-eight-year-old mother of two with an M.D. and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, joined the FDA and was asked to review an application from the drug company Richardson-Merrell for the use of thalidomide as an anti-nausea and sedative medication. She was disturbed by the lack of coherent data on safety, and by several hints that the drug posed real risks. The company dismissed her concerns. But Kelsey would not relent from pressing Richardson-Merrell for the truth. Ultimately she discovered that the company had distributed samples of thalidomide to some twenty thousand patients "experimentally," and that thousands of mothers who took the drug during pregnancy delivered children lacking the long bones of the arms and legs, a syndrome termed phocomelia. Some babies had other horrific complications as well, including the absence of a bowel opening or ear canals and segmented intestines. It turned out that the German company Grünenthal, which had licensed the drug to Richardson-Merrell, had lied about the safety studies in animals—there were almost no such studies prior to human testing. Moreover, Richardson-Merrell had decided not to report to the FDA problems with the drug that it had observed in the clinic.

Kelsey's stubborn insistence on data led to a new law in 1962. All drug experiments in humans now had to be approved in advance by the FDA, and records had to be kept on adverse reactions to these experimental treatments. Moreover, patients had to be asked for their consent, and had to give it, before entering into a clinical trial. It was, Hilts points out, a sea change not only in regulation but in the culture of American medicine: "Nations had long wrestled with charlatans, frauds, and criminals who pressed useless and dangerous substances on customers," he observes. "But the final arbiter was an 'expert,' not empirical scientific evidence. The old standard allowed 'experienced' doctors to declare what was safe and what worked. The new law was a direct threat to that authority and the AMA's house of delegates unsuccessfully demanded outright repeal of the new law, at least as far as it suggested that a drug's effectiveness could be determined by scientific tests. For the first time, experts were in second place and investigations themselves were essential."

YET THE ROAD OF RATIONAL regulation did not run smoothly. Hilts attributes the detours and the obstacles to the growing power of conservatives who weakened the FDA. Like their forebears in the nineteenth century, Ronald Reagan and Newt Gingrich harbored a deep suspicion of federal interference in commerce. Once again, industry successfully lobbied government officials to limit the FDA's power, with disastrous consequences. Consider only the example of Reye's syndrome, for which children who have a viral infection such as influenza or chicken pox and take aspirin are at risk. About a week after the viral infection, they experience nausea and vomiting; a range of changes in cognitive function from amnesia to lethargy to coma; and liver failure. The syndrome has a death rate of some twenty percent. Among the survivors, about one-third have permanent mental retardation or seizure disorders.

Several studies, including those by the Centers for Disease Control, gave support to the link between aspirin therapy for the flu or chicken pox and Reye's syndrome. But the companies that manufactured aspirin intervened. They succeeded in squelching negative reports by the CDC and physician organizations, and they lobbied the Office of Management and Budget to cancel regulatory measures that affected the prescription of aspirin to children with these viral infections. Hilts also shows how pharmaceutical companies such as Bayer funded a front organization, the American Reye's Syndrome Association, which tried to directly target parents, suggesting that they diagnose the syndrome themselves and then tell their doctors how to diagnose it. All of this was done to prevent a decline in profit. "The instructions in the brochure were an elaborate ruse," Hilts writes. "They said that no one knew the cause of Reye's and listed an array of possible causes, including 'genetic factors ... pesticides, chemical wastes, afla-toxins, etc., and medications used to control vomiting and fever such as anti-emetics, aspirin and acetaminophen.'"

That last bit was particularly deceptive, because it diverted parents away from the proper treatment for fevers. The brochure went on to give a long explanation of what to look for in order to diagnose your child; it also said that the disease was impossible to rule out or to confirm without a blood test. It asserted that "since many doctors are not familiar with RS, and the symptoms can be mistaken for meningitis, encephalitis, diabetes, poisoning, or especially in older children and adults, drug overdose, it is important to remind them about Reye's." The aspirin makers began to broadcast ads that began by declaring: "Stay tuned for a medical bulletin on Reye's syndrome." The subsequent message declared that the cause of Reye's was unknown, and aspirin was never mentioned. Hilts estimates that the watered-down warnings about aspirin that finally emerged could account for the deaths of some 113 children during the period from November, 1981 to November, 1983.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF HIS book, Hilts shows his cards. He believes that science should drive policy, and that the FDA is a much maligned and misunderstood agency. Yet he is not an apologist for the agency: he shines a light also on its failings and its flaws. Its shortcomings came into sharpest focus in the midst of the AIDS crisis, when lethargy, ignorance, prejudice, and a lack of leadership resulted in an unforgivable ignorance about the burgeoning epidemic. It was the ferocity of AIDS advocates and the frustrations of clinical scientists that pushed the FDA into gear. After initial intransigence, AIDS drugs were approved in record time, and a so-called "parallel track" was taken in development whereby formal placebo clinical trials were conducted in tandem with compassionate distribution of the drug to needy individuals who did

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not qualify for the clinical studies. (That paradigm informed our deliberations on kidney cancer and interleukin-2.)

Hilts is also critical of the FDA for its failure to regulate the vast and lucrative herbal supplement and natural foods industries. His criticisms provide the context for a proper understanding of the recent controversy about ephedra. A loosely regulated weight-loss product containing ephedra was linked to the death in February of the Baltimore Orioles pitcher Steve Bechler. It turns out that the conventional wisdom that Mother Nature is a benevolent goddess, that her fruits consistently fortify our health, is narrow and naïve. Many plants and herbs are poisonous. Moreover, when "natural supplements" are prepared and sold in health food stores and supermarkets, the purity of the products is far from uniform. Such products have passed through the largest remaining loophole in federal legislation. Adverse reactions are not reported in an organized and structured way, because herbal products still are not classified as medicines, even though biologically they are medicines. Drug companies shoulder the burden of proof to demonstrate to the FDA that their medications are safe before they are marketed, but with dietary supplements the burden of proof rests with the FDA.

Tommy Thompson, the secretary of health and human services, averred in a recent news conference that he would not use products containing ephedra or give them to his loved ones. Yet Dr. Mark B. McClellen, the recently appointed commissioner of the FDA, seems to have taken only half-steps after the uproar over Bechler's death. While the companies will now have to adhere to good manufacturing practices and accurately label their herbal products, they still will not be held to the scientific standards of drug development with regard to proof of safety and efficacy. So the last chapter of Hilts's book is yet to be written. The struggle between sober science and raw commerce continues. ■

David Novak

Ideas and Idols

THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM: READING GENESIS
By Leon R. Kass
(Free Press, 576 pp., $35)

THE PROPHETS: WHO THEY WERE, WHAT THEY ARE
By Norman Podhoretz
(Free Press, 400 pp., $30)

READING THE BIBLE HAS once again become a prominent activity in American culture, a primary element of many discussions about "politics"—not politics as tactics and procedures in the usual sense, but politics in a philosophical sense, which is about the public nature of human existence in this world. Both friend (notably the president of the United States) and foe regard the Bible as a founding document, if not *the* founding document, of Western political culture. Moreover, the new political interest is directed significantly toward the Hebrew Bible, or the "Old Testament," which (much more than the New Testament) is a profoundly political book; this was noticed long ago by thinkers as divergent as Spinoza and Nietzsche, but it is being noticed again today. Leon R. Kass's and Norman Podhoretz's books are both political reflections on the Bible. They have similar political concerns, though they are of different intellectual value.

There are three schools, I think, three philosophical programs, in contemporary political readings of the Bible. First, there are what might be termed "radical" readings. The radicals (many of whom see themselves as revolutionaries) would like to "deconstruct" the political culture of the West at its roots, which they correctly locate in the Bible. If the enemy here is "hierarchy," and especially "patriarchy," then the Bible is the source from which the enemy still emanates. For the radicals, this reactionary quality of Scripture requires a continual "working through" of what or who is still oppressing us. Certain feminist readings of the Bible exemplify this approach.

Second, there are the "liberal" or "democratic" readings of the Bible, according to which the Bible contains both a "particularistic" concern and a "universalistic" concern. The particularistic concern is with ritual and cult: this comprises the Jewish people's traditional relationship with their God. The universalistic concern is with ethics: this pertains to human relations generally. Liberal readers like to regard the ethical concern of the Bible as primary and the ritual concern as valid only when it serves to fortify an ethical culture. The liberals want to use the Bible to develop what they see to be the still largely ethical potential in the political culture of the West, a culture to whose moral leadership they often lay claim.

Third, there is the "conservative" reading of the Bible. Unlike the radical reading and the liberal reading, the conservative reading does not divide the text of the Bible against itself. It wishes to strengthen the traditional moral principles of Western civilization, principles that it sees as being originally taught by the Bible. This restorative endeavor is best accomplished when the text of the Bible is taken to be true in its unified message. Here is where Kass and Podhoretz enter the conversation. Although they are conservatives, they are not fundamentalists who reject out of hand any suggestion that the text of the Bible might stem from different authors. Still, they avoid that historical question by confining their attention to the biblical texts as we have received them from their final redactor. In fact, both Kass and Podhoretz question whether modern biblical scholarship, with its incessant breakdown of the text into various competing fragments, has not hindered the philosophical attempt to derive any coherent meaning from the Bible, let alone any lasting truth from it. For this reason, they resort to modern biblical scholarship quite sparsely.

KASS AND PODHORETZ ARE NEOconservatives: over the years they have moved (Podhoretz more explicitly) from more liberal political positions to more conservative ones. A liberal might be seen as someone who thinks that our society needs to progress toward its still largely unfulfilled democratic ideals, whereas a conservative might be seen as someone who thinks that our society has lost too much of its traditional morality and needs to retrieve it. The philosophical part of that conserva-

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tive retrieval involves a return to the roots of Western civilization in general, and of the American founding in particular; and those roots, as Leo Strauss most famously taught, are to be found in the relation between biblical revelation and Greek philosophy. Kass and Podhoretz have come to mine the biblical side of this perennial relation in Western political culture.

Kass and Podhoretz are also Jews, religiously identifiable Jews. In their books both disclose that they attend synagogues and participate in Jewish rituals, even though both seem somewhat embarrassed that, as Kass puts it, "my practice is still wanting." So it is no accident that each man should look to biblical roots for his philosophical bearings in the world of politics. Whether or not the Bible is the founding document of America, it is the founding document of Judaism. In fact, one of the major aspects of Kass's retrieval of the Bible is his strong assertion that "one can deduce absolutely nothing moral" from the scientific-metaphysical reflections of the Greek philosophers, meaning Plato and especially Aristotle. That this admission comes from a scientist-philosopher such as Kass, whom many take to be a great contemporary advocate of an Aristotelian view of nature, is one of the most delightful surprises in his very remarkable book. Aristotle was a great moral philosopher, but Kass does not seem to think that Aristotle's moral philosophy stems from his metaphysics. And on questions of familial-sexual morality, Kass finds even his cherished Aristotle wanting.

PODHORETZ'S BOOK PORTRAYS THE prophets of ancient Israel as having been engaged in a sustained, consistent, but only partially effective polemic. He calls his account of the prophets "the story of a war." In this war they won some impressive victories in their time, but they could not totally vanquish "this enemy" who "keeps coming back." So Podhoretz, himself an accomplished polemicist (a word that comes from *polemos,* the Greek word for "war"), comes to his subject with a good deal of sympathy. The object of the prophetic polemic was idolatry. The object of Podhoretz's polemic is liberalism. Podhoretz believes that his war with liberals is a continuation of the prophets' war against idol-worshippers. Thus he focuses particular attention on the liberals' use of the Bible, calling their reading—or, for him, their misreading—by a rather inelegant neologism, "liberological." In this way, he makes his own polemic much more than a debate over policies and procedures. He transforms it into a perennial philosophical battle. He also tries to show (often quite convincingly) that when liberals employ the Bible for their purposes, they do so badly.

What is idolatry? Podhoretz defines it as apostasy or syncretism. Apostasy—literally, "standing away from"—is "putting other gods *before* Him." Syncretism is "putting other gods *beside* Him." The "Him" in these definitions is the Lord God, the one creator of heaven and earth, who has chosen Israel for a special relationship between himself and them called a *b'rit* or "covenant." Idolatry, then, is the primary negation of the covenantal relationship between God and Israel. Whether replaced or compromised, this God has been dethroned by any kind of idolatry. Heavily relying on the Israeli scholar Yehezkel Kaufmann, Podhoretz takes this covenantal relationship to be "monotheism," which is not only the worship of one God but, more essentially, the worship of one God because there are no "other gods." What others call "gods" are really creatures that human beings have chosen to deify or invent for themselves. Their "idols" or icons are humanly invented symbols of these created powers, and so they are twice removed from the one true God.

While idolatry might be excusable among the Gentiles, who have no covenantal relationship with God (although there are occasional Gentile monotheists mentioned in the Bible, Job being the most prominent), it is inexcusable among the Jews, because of what they know from the very beginnings of their history. Thus Podhoretz accepts Kaufmann's view—which the latter articulated in opposition to most modern, critical Bible scholars—that monotheism was always the religion of Israel, and that idolatry was always an attempt to include in the covenantal relationship something essentially foreign and antithetical to it. Monotheism is not an ideal toward which the religion of Israel gradually and haltingly aspired in its historical emergence out of idolatry; monotheism is what the religion of Israel always presupposed.

So far, so good. But only so far. For Podhoretz's larger argument fails on theological, philosophical, and even polemical grounds. In his theological argument with the liberals, Podhoretz rightly asserts a number of times that, for the prophets, fidelity to God "embraces *both* ritual and morality." Thus idolaters such as King Ahab, the epitome of an idolatrous ruler (who was goaded by his wife Jezebel, a foreign queen), and his whole regime "embodied a perfect synthesis of idolatry and social oppression." This is an adequate designation of both the covenant and its obverse, but Podhoretz does not explain why this is so. He can meet the liberal theory of "morality over ritual" with counterexamples, but he cannot offer a better explanation of the relation of ritual and morality in the covenant and why idolatry so radically subverts it. Not having presented a sufficient account of the covenant, Podhoretz is unable to show us exactly why idolatry is so religiously odious and so politically dangerous. He rushes to treat the idolatrous negation of the covenant without having paid sufficient attention to what it is negating. He is off to the war before fully appreciating the homeland for which the war is being fought.

THE REASON THAT THE COVENANT is a synthesis of ritual (of which God is the direct object) and morality (of which fellow humans are the direct objects) is that the covenant is actually twofold. First, there is the Noahide covenant, which was made by God with all humankind after Noah and his family's survival of the Flood that destroyed the rest of humankind, who had descended to a subhuman moral level. From this covenant, all the basic morality needed by humankind is available to universal, human, political experience. This morality is then formulated by human reason. (On this point Kass is brilliant.) Whatever morality emerges from God's special revelation to Israel makes greater demands on the chosen people without annulling the earlier universal morality. That is why the prophets can address moral admonitions not only to Israel, but also to the Gentiles.

And then there is God's covenant with Israel alone. This covenant fulfills the great lack of the earlier covenant, which did not provide a sufficiently direct and concrete relationship with the Lord God. From this special covenant all ritual is derived. To concentrate on morality at the expense of ritual is to make God a mere prop for an essentially human and humanistic society. To concentrate on ritual at the expense of morality "makes God seem a tribal deity" (in Podhoretz's apt words). Thus a God who does not command ritual is too distant to be loved, and a God who does not command morality is too cozy to be feared.

Idolatry is largely the attempt to provide the people with gods who are too cozy

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to make any moral demands on them. Lacking the transcendence of the Creator-God, these gods are as needy as the humans who make them gods. That is why humans can do business with them. These gods have more physical power, but humans have more political savvy. The only demand these gods make is for a little ritual attention from their worshippers, for which they are therefore in debt to their worshippers, a debt that these worshippers can call in whenever they have the need to do so. These gods are essentially unlike the Creator-God in whose world we humans, and Israel especially, are guests, not fellow tenants. So whereas the worshippers of God have to first affirm His universal covenant by their moral deeds before they can directly approach Him as the One who chose them, idolaters attempt to evade the universal moral covenant by making their own deals with gods of their choosing. These gods seem to demand less and give more. That is why they are so tempting.

BUT NONE OF THESE FUNDAMENTALS are to be found in Podhoretz's book, and so he is unable to make a theologically effective argument against idolatry that could be more persuasive than that of the liberals. And the failure of Podhoretz's theological rejection of liberalism leads straight to his philosophical confusion. Speaking more philosophically, he asserts that there is a relation between universalism and particularism—that is, between universalism associated with morality and particularism associated with ritual, which, for the Bible, would of course be Jewish ritual or the religious culture of the Jewish people. But what is that relation, and how does it manifest itself politically? He writes that "no contradiction appears between the particular and the universal.... God has chosen Israel to be a light unto the nations, but... the light will shine with full radiance only when Israel, securely restored in Zion, ... then obeys *all* His laws and statutes." A few pages earlier, he speaks of "a universalism arrived at through particularity."

If I understand him correctly, Podhoretz seems to be saying that the Jews will be able to teach God's law to the world not by assimilating into the world culturally and politically, but when they are intact in their own land observing God's law fully. That full observance is both ritual and moral. Following this logic, though, it would seem that "universalism through particularity" could mean that the Jews have a mission to convert the world to Judaism, thus making what is now particular (that is, what obtains only for the Jews) later universal (that is, what will obtain for everyone). The part will become the whole. Does Podhoretz mean that the Jews have some kind of moral authority over the rest of the world? Then the non-Jews need to learn their morality from Jewish sources. But aren't they supposed, in the biblical genealogy of morals, to already know what is right and what is wrong from the Noahide covenant and its universal law (what some Jewish thinkers, including Kass, regard as the biblical version of natural law)?

At best, the Jews might remind the world from time to time what has always been morally required of human beings and their societies; but anything more than that suggests that Judaism now has a messianic authority, and such a view has no foundation in Jewish sources. In contrast to some kinds of Christianity, Judaism does not claim such a role for itself. To do so would be to exercise a kind of moral, if not political, imperialism—something that Jews ought to be wary of, having themselves been so often the victims of it. This kind of self-congratulatory universalism hardly makes for a philosophically attractive politics. Podhoretz has not thought carefully enough about the philosophical implications of his remarks about particularity and universality in the Bible and in Judaism.

IN SPEAKING OF "A LIGHT UNTO the nations," Podhoretz is making the same textual mistake as many liberal interpreters of the Bible. (Kass, too, makes this mistake when he speaks of Israel as "advanc[ing] the cause of justice in the world," but it is less central to his argument than it is to Podhoretz's.) The passage in Isaiah that supposedly speaks of "a light unto the nations" actually speaks of Israel being *am l'or goyim*, "a light of the nations." What is the difference between "unto the nations" and "of the nations"? The difference is that the light that shines is not Israel projecting its light toward the nations as a kind of exalted propaganda, but rather God's light shining on Israel, which, when fully radiant in the days of the Messiah, will attract the Gentiles to it, namely, to God, as Israel has been attracted to God. The attraction will be religious, not moral. And even then, according to the great medieval Jewish commentator David Kimhi, the most moral instruction Israel will have to offer the nations of the world will be to remind them of the Noahide laws that they already accepted before they could live in God's world legitimately. The notion of the prophetic "mission of Israel" as universal moral guidance from the Jews was a staple of nineteenth-century Reform and Liberal Judaism, for which Podhoretz has little use—except that he now adapts it to his own purposes.

Podhoretz has the hardest time making a plausible case, let alone a convincing one. He attempts to condemn contemporary liberalism as idolatry by equating it with the "culture of narcissism" (Christopher Lasch's famous phrase), arguing that "idolatry is the cult of self. In politics ... this species of idolatry has been the prime progenitor of the delusion that we humans are capable of creating a perfect world." For Podhoretz, liberals, with their individualistic cultural talk, are narcissists. But aren't many conservatives, with their discourses of libertarianism and market individualism, just as narcissistic? Anyway, a narcissist is too

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self-absorbed to be concerned with anyone outside himself, much less with any god above himself. Idolatry can be embraced only by those with enough metaphysical desire to want something beyond themselves, something transcendent. The theological problem of most liberalism is its atheism, not its polytheism or idolatry. The problem with liberalism—even religious liberalism—is that man, not God, is the measure of all things. Perhaps some atheistic liberals sooner or later do succumb to idolatry; but there is no necessary jump from liberalism to idolatry, or at least Podhoretz has not shown one.

Podhoretz's prior political commitments prevent him from identifying what is the best modern candidate for idolatry: nationalism, which I distinguish here from the morally legitimate claims of nationhood or group feeling. Nationalism is the ideology for which the state is a god ("this mortal god," in Hobbes's famous phrase) or automatically expresses God's will for the world (this was Hegel's version of the sin), with no recourse to any higher court that could overrule its pseudo-divine claims. The most egregious forms of this idolatrous nationalism have been fascism and communism and the nation-states that they dominated or still dominate. (I write as statues of Saddam Hussein are being pulled down in the streets of Baghdad.) Indeed, nationalism even tempts (but thankfully does not dominate) deeply democratic nation-states such as the United States and Israel, with which Podhoretz identifies. Here, unlike the politically benign narcissism of the individual, we have collective narcissism, which is dangerous politically and religiously because of its projections into the world in the form of conquest.

Had he been philosophically bold enough to follow the prophetic fight against idolatry to wherever in history its logic leads, Podhoretz might have associated himself with the genuinely anti-idolatrous thought of the Israeli-religious philosopher Yeshayahu Leibowitz. Wasn't Leibowitz a prophet-like voice when he challenged the nationalism of David Ben-Gurion, who successfully turned the rabbinical-religious establishment (with their full cooperation) into a lackey of the state, rather than letting it be a voice to challenge government policies on behalf of the law of God while simultaneously affirming the Jewish legitimacy of the state's existence (as did the true prophets in the Bible)? Didn't Leibowitz see in the reverence for the Israeli state a frightening similarity to the way the idolatrous kings of ancient Israel used the priests of the Temple and the official prophets to provide religious rationalizations for their self-serving realpolitik?

Podhoretz's neoconservative dogmas prevent him from locating the most plausible modern versions of the perennially dangerous idolatry that he rightly abhors. He ought to be able to embrace someone like Leibowitz on theological grounds, but his polemical obsessions make him turn instead even to "socialists and atheists," who "serve God without being aware that he exists." How people who deny that God exists can be effective prophet-like opponents of idolatry is beyond me. Moreover, didn't these socialists have an "other god" in their Marxist ideology? Yet Podhoretz is willing to bless them when they fit into his politics, irrespective of their philosophy and their hostility to theology. On the opposite side, Podhoretz is willing to associate any social practice of which he disapproves with idolatry. He even links the phenomenon of working mothers with the pagan practice of child sacrifice! And so his philosophical argument is undone by his political prejudices.

BUT PHILOSOPHY IS WHAT Leon R. Kass does best, in the most classical manner. He is determined to read the Bible, in this case the book of Genesis, in "the same spirit in which I read Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*—indeed, any great book—seeking wisdom regarding human life lived well in relation to the whole." To be sure, Kass also has a political agenda—his opponents include Marxists, feminists, and environmentalists, whom he puts in the category of the "anti-wisdoms of modern thought"; but he knows how to keep his politics from overwhelming his philosophy. His main interest is with how human life in community is to be lived. Thus he sees many of the stories in Genesis to be "paradigmatic" anthropologically, dealing with fundamental human situations rather than with particular persons in ancient history. Along these lines, the Garden of Eden story deals with "The Follies of Reason and Freedom"; the story of Noah deals with "Elementary Justice [as] Law and Covenant"; the story of Abraham deals with "The Meaning of Patriarchy"; and so on. His extraordinary book is one of the most sustained philosophical meditations I have ever encountered. It amply rewards the intellectual effort that it demands.

But how does one read a book "philosophically"? For Kass, philosophy is the exercise of "unaided human reason." He also calls it "inquiry." Due to his affinity with Greek philosophy, I assume he means "theorizing," which comes from the Greek word *theorein*: to directly gaze at the heavens—where the true, intelligible order, the nature of the universe, shows or reveals itself. But if that is the case, one cannot really inquire into the writings of Plato or Aristotle or any human thinker in such a way, because they engage in discursive reasoning. They do not reveal, they argue. And they make arguments not least about nature, including human nature,

Ignis Fatuus

Something or someone. A feeling
among a swish of reeds. A swampy
glow haloes the Spanish moss,
& there's a swaying at the edge
like a child's memory of abuse
growing flesh, living on what
a screech owl recalls. Nothing
but a presence that fills up
the mind, a replenished body
singing its way into doubletalk.
In the city, *Will o' the Wisp*
floats out of Miles' trumpet,
leaning ghosts against nighttime's
backdrop of neon. A foolish fire
can also start this way: before
you slide the key into the lock
& half-turn the knob, you know
someone has snuck into your life.
A high window, a corner of sky
spies on upturned drawers of underwear
& unanswered letters, on a tin box
of luminous buttons & subway tokens,
on books, magazines, & clothes
flung to the studio's floor,
his sweat lingering in the air.
Years ago, you followed someone
here, in love with breath
kissing the nape of your neck,
back when it was easy to be
at least two places at once.

YUSEF KOMUNYAKAA

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which manifests itself in political activity. Still, when reading Plato or Aristotle or any other genuine philosopher, we are engaged in a dialogue with the philosopher's way of seeing nature. In such a dialogue, we are either persuaded by his or her theory regarding nature or we are unpersuaded. So if we are persuaded by, let us say, Aristotle's theory regarding nature, we do not know it by "unaided" reason. Rather, Aristotle has aided us in knowing something significant about nature. If we are unpersuaded, we usually look for someone else to persuade us of the truth of his or her theory. In other words, when disappointed with one aid, we look for another.

It is only when we try to look at the natural datum cold, as it were, that our reason touches up against what is unarguable because it itself is not argued but only revealed. So I have to assume that Kass reads Plato's and Aristotle's works more critically—that is, more discursively—than he reads the Bible, inasmuch as the Bible, certainly Genesis, makes no arguments, but only presents what it proclaims to be truth. The Bible, then, is not just "any great book." Kass himself acknowledges this when he says, in his reading of Genesis, that he wishes "to rely as little as possible on intermediaries," but that this can be no more than "a desired objective." For Kass, moreover, the truth revealed in Genesis is "metaphysical and ethical, not scientific or historical," an assertion that removes him from the company of "creationists" and the like, who want to challenge modern cosmology and biology from a literal reading of the creation accounts in Genesis. He has thus defined the object of his philosophical inquiry with admirable precision. He has located the Bible for political philosophy as masterfully as Northrop Frye located the Bible for a philosophy of Western literature.

In order for Kass to be able to read Genesis philosophically, he has to break with the influence of Leo Strauss, who famously asserted that "the Old Testament does not know 'nature.'" For if this is true, and if philosophy is unaided reason regarding nature, then there is not only no philosophy in the Bible, there is also no way that one could read the Bible philosophically. Kass, a professor at the University of Chicago (where Strauss taught and where some of his disciples still teach), confesses that he makes this break "nervously"—but still he makes it willingly, "in order to bring our study of the biblical text into conversation with other wisdom-seeking activities." In other words, he is determined to find nature in the Bible, and to reflect on it philosophically.

Kass's enterprise requires deriving truth from the biblical text rather than judging whether the text is true or not. He seems to agree with the Talmudic aphorism "If the Torah seems empty to you, the emptiness is yours, not the Torah's." The fact that a finite and fallible human mind cannot grasp all of the Torah's truth does not mean that it is not there. Thus Kass's method is not really different from the more perceptive and less apologetic method of those whom he calls "the traditional readers of the text," even though he seems to think that it is, at least at the very beginning of his book.

KASS'S CHOICE OF GENESIS FOR his philosophical retrieval of the Bible is wise. For Genesis—especially its first eleven chapters, which deal with the beginnings of humankind—does not require an immediate acceptance of what Kass calls "biblical authority." Rather, it seems to present what he calls "self-evident truths." In other words, unlike other books of the Bible, with their "thou shalts" and "thou shalt nots," Genesis does not make immediate theological or moral claims on its readers. Instead it invites the reader to think about its presentations of human nature and, as Kass puts it, "to confirm them by an act of self-reflection." It only gradually leads the reader to the authority of the direct commandments of God. Kass's notion parallels certain medieval Jewish commentators who argued that without the descriptive background of Genesis, the authority of God's commandments in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy would be unintelligible. Genesis allows its readers a greater freedom to ponder its meaning than the other books of the Pentateuch. And Kass has taken full advantage of that freedom to ponder the idea of human nature in Genesis. What he says in this regard is rich and profound.

My only criticism of Kass's extraordinary book has to do with his theological carelessness when speaking of the object of theological inquiry, that is, God. He uses too many synonyms for God. Whereas his continual use of the term "the divine" might work when speaking of God as the distant Creator (but not of God when He chooses Abraham and his descendants), calling the God of the Bible "the wise legislator" or "Being" or "the highest principle of being" suggests an abstract and impersonal Ultimate Reality more akin to Aristotle's Unmoved Mover. These terms seem inadequate to the God of the Bible who is not only loved but also loves. Kass seems to be uncomfortable with traditional God-talk. I wish that he had given the reasons for his discomfort.

WHEREAS THE FIRST ELEVEN chapters of Genesis deal with humankind and human nature, the rest of the book deals with the history of a particular clan on its way to becoming a people, the people of Israel. In dealing with this material, Kass has chosen to concentrate his attention on the issue of family, which seems to be the predominant theme in the second part of Genesis. In his words, "decent, honorable, and reverent family life is itself a central goal of the new national-political teaching." Thus, for example, Kass sees in the story of Noah's degradation, drunk and naked in his tent after surviving the flood, the loss of "his paternal authority and his very humanity." In other words, a father needs to act in a way that his children will be proud of, not ashamed of, so that his children, like Noah's sons, will not have to "cover their father's nakedness." Here is where Kass's political interests come to the fore; but he never turns the biblical text into a pretext. He comes to the Bible for light in the political darkness, not for weapons with which to wage war on his political enemies. (And from a political perspective, it is a delight to

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see throughout this book Kass's expressions of indebtedness to his students, whom he mentions frequently and by name.)

In his reading of Genesis, Kass wants to discover the importance of the family—traditionally understood as father, mother, children, and extended relatives. Kass is a traditionalist, but he is not a sentimentalist; he does not lower himself to the kind of psychologizing (best exemplified by Bill Moyers's television series on Genesis) that judges the stories in Genesis by the standards of "family dynamics" or the like. Instead, his treatment of the patriarchal family presented in Genesis is metaphysical and ethical. He is engaged in what philosophers today call "virtue theory," seeing in the characters of Genesis exemplars to be imitated (except when they are clearly villains, such as Cain or Laban). Moreover, Kass argues that patriarchy (and hierarchy in general) is not the oppression the radicals think it is, or the primitiveness the liberals think it is. Thus, when discussing the patriarchal act of infant circumcision, which to many suggests a man's authority even to mutilate his own male child, Kass sees it as "a taming of maleness," putting men into the service of the (more traditionally womanly) work of child rearing. Instead of emphasizing "virility and potency," it subordinates them to the task of covenantal transmission. Thus, for him, Genesis not only teaches us how a family ought to function; it more importantly teaches us why the family is the primary (although certainly not the exclusive) locus of human flourishing. Confronted with the Bible's recognition of this truth, Kass transfers his affections from Aristotle.

Conservatives can learn a great deal from Leon R. Kass, but it does not come for free. This is because he is not interested in the type of economically obsessed conservatism that in the end turns out to be but an earlier form of modern liberalism. He also veers away from the political fascination with Greek philosophy of many conservative intellectuals, especially the Straussians. In short, he requires us to rethink what we hold dear from Western political culture by going back to its still-living roots in the Bible. This might not require a leap of faith, but it does require jumping over political prejudices that have turned out to be, as the Bible says, "broken wells that hold no water." ■

Mark Polizzotti

Reality Games

HISTORY OF THE SURREALIST MOVEMENT
by Gérard Durozoi
translated by Alison Anderson
(University of Chicago Press, 805 pp., $95)

SURREALISM: DESIRE UNBOUND
edited by Jennifer Mundy
(Princeton University Press, 349 pp., $65)

"Beware, André Breton, of one day figuring in literary textbooks; whereas if we aspire to an honor, it is to be inscribed for posterity in the history of cataclysms." This warning, issued by the poet René Daumal in 1930, when Surrealism was in its heyday, should be the required epigraph of anyone who writes about the movement. Granted, many of Surrealism's productions are so arcane that they practically scream for textbook explication. But the most radical intellectual current of the twentieth century did not live by the head alone. More than a collection of writers and artists, manifesto signers and demonstration organizers, the Surrealist group was a gathering of men and (far fewer) women whose capacity for grandeur, pettiness, personal and professional jealousy, altruism, friendship, discovery, betrayal, tragedy, and even inspired silliness made for cataclysms aplenty. In Gérard Durozoi's tome, however, much of what made the movement so engaging—its vibrant essence—is bleached away, replaced by a sanitized accounting that may leave some readers wondering what all the fuss was about.

The Surrealist movement officially began in October 1924, with the publication of André Breton's *Manifesto of Surrealism* and the opening of the Bureau for Surrealist Research, a storefront meeting place intended to attract fellow travelers. In its broadest outlines, the history of Surrealism can be divided into four approximate and overlapping phases: the period of automatism, starting with the group's experiments with automatic writing and the unconscious in the 1920s and ending with Breton's sad dismissal of these experiments in 1933 as a "history of continual misfortune"; the time of active engagement in leftist politics, from the late 1920s until the eve of the war, during which Breton co-authored a manifesto on "revolutionary art" with Leon Trotsky, and the Surrealists watched their hopes for a meaningful collaboration with international communism slowly erode; the war years, a time of exile for many in the group, who waited out the occupation in the safety of America; and finally the two decades following Breton's return to France in 1946, during which he, surrounded by a new membership less than half his age, tried to re-invigorate the movement in a world that had irrevocably changed. Looking back, Breton, in his appropriation of the French national motto, defined Surrealism's one constant as the pursuit of "*la poésie, l'amour et la liberté*." But few paths have sprouted so many byways and blind alleys, or encountered so many roadblocks.

From the start, Surrealism attracted scandal, even reveled in it. In its first year of existence, the group mocked the death of the nationally beloved novelist Anatole France in a broadside titled *A Corpse*; disrupted a prominent literary banquet by shattering the restaurant mirrors, swinging from the chandelier, and brawling with fellow diners; openly courted the very unpopular French Communist Party (PCF); and supported the Moroccan rebels with whom France was at war, a stance that won the Surrealists the kind of public sympathy now accorded John Walker Lindh. These were not mere pranks or bids for attention. Nor were the Surrealists interested, to the despair of some members, in inventing new artistic forms. Instead the goal was to create a context in which art, politics, literature, and the entire Western way of being would be questioned and re-evaluated. As Durozoi points out, Surrealism's primary success was to have created "a constantly active center that remains, beyond philosophical and artistic schools or trends, the

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only movement of the twentieth century to espouse an ethic." Breton, citing Marx and Rimbaud, more succinctly stated this aim as to "transform the world" and to "change life."

A number of modernist art movements have aspired to transform the world, or at least to revolutionize the prevailing attitudes toward art. But the Surrealist project was more global, encompassing not only the seen but also ways of seeing. Unlike Dada, its predecessor and training ground, Surrealism was not content merely to destroy; it wanted to unearth the foundations and rebuild from a whole new set of blueprints. The group's excavations from the outset: Antonin Artaud, Robert Desnos, Louis Aragon, Paul Eluard, Max Ernst, Michel Leiris, André Masson, Joan Miró, Philippe Soupault, Yves Tanguy, and Breton himself, the man who codified and embodied Surrealism from the beginning until his—and, for all intents and purposes, the movement's—death in 1966. Though many of these figures fell (or were chased) away as Surrealism evolved, to be replaced by others (Georges Bataille, Raymond Queneau, Alberto Giacometti, Salvador Dalí: the list goes on) who were themselves replaced by others, Breton remained consistently at the helm. He was the director

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ANDRÉ BRETON, *Poème-objet*, 1941

helped bring to light such forgotten or underappreciated figures as Sade, Lautréamont, Fourier, Meister Eckhart, and the Postman Cheval, and led the Surrealists to ally themselves with the Stalinist PCF, the Trotskyist opposition, various anarchist groups, the Citizens of the World initiative, and others. In the end, however, "that little particle of free thought" (as Breton once tagged the movement) proved too resolutely independent to make common cause with anyone for long. Like most tragic heroes, the Surrealists eventually found themselves alone.

One of the glories of Surrealism has always been its membership, the literary and artistic luminaries who populated it who inspired in his actors the best performances of their careers, as evidenced by the works that many of them produced. He was also, as his survivors quickly discovered, the only figure capable of reconciling so many disparate viewpoints, personalities, and egos.

Given the level of talent, unorthodoxy, and general rebelliousness inherent in such a lineup, it is hardly surprising that the history of Surrealism included more than its share of upheavals, both creative and destructive. Yet to read Durozoi's version, the real energy of Surrealism lay more in tallies of who contributed what to which exhibition or periodical than in the passions that helped shape those periodicals and that played such a large hand in determining the group's ever-changing roster. *History of the Surrealist Movement* is a huge volume, covering everything from the proto-Surrealists' involvement with Dada in the early 1920s through their spiritual grandchildren's squabble fifty years later over the movement's official demise. It is agonizingly thorough but weirdly incomplete, filled with the kind of painstaking factual notation that sits well in a doctoral dissertation but is almost devoid of spirit or verve.

A philosopher by training, Durozoi is no stranger to Surrealism. During the movement's final two decades, he was, as the jacket blurb puts it, "closely affiliated" with the group, and he has published several works on the subject, with titles such as *Le Surréalisme: Théories, Thèmes, Techniques*. (Literary textbooks, indeed.) Like any good Surrealist, he professes disdain or condescending tolerance toward such overtly academic enterprises as the ten-day seminar on Surrealism at the Cérisy conference center in 1966; but his book would not be out of place, in any way other than price, on the syllabus of the most traditional graduate course.

Admittedly, Durozoi has a huge mandate to fulfill. For years, the standard work has been Maurice Nadeau's *The History of Surrealism*, published in 1945 and available in English since 1965. From the moment of its appearance, it was decried by Surrealists of all stripes as too frivolous, too "anecdotal," and for declaring the movement (in a line that the author later expunged) dead with World War II—perhaps one reason that Durozoi devotes so much space to fairly inconsequential events from the 1950s and 1960s. Nadeau had been only distantly affiliated with the Surrealists, and his history is clearly written from an outsider's perspective, which no doubt lends the book a large measure of its pungency.

Durozoi, by contrast, has written an insider's book, wholly orthodox, carefully avoiding anything that might seem indiscreet, unflattering, or petty: in a word, too human. He discusses the group hypnosis sessions of 1922, which yielded some fascinating results, but he fails to mention the fakery to which many participants later admitted. He describes the "atmosphere of effervescent research" at the Surrealist

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Bureau, even though the group's own logbooks reveal this to be mainly wishful thinking. And in presenting Breton's well-known interactions with Nadja, the eponymous heroine of his most famous work, he glides handily over the calculation, disregard, cowardice, and manipulation that characterized much of that relationship. Throughout this book, inconvenient people and events vanish like commissars from a Stalinist group photo. One can almost see Durozoi courting the approval of the inner circle: submitting his drafts to the café roundtable, acquiescing to the suppression of certain remarks, snickering with the others at the in-jokes and the obscure asides.

AS A RESULT, THE CHARACTERS emerge here more as writing machines and painting machines than as individuals. To take one example: in 1932, Breton broke with Aragon, his closest friend at the time, ostensibly over Aragon's siding with the Stalinists against Surrealism. The event brought to a head fifteen years of jealousies, hurts, rivalries, reconciliations, and any number of ambivalent emotions that a long and intimate collaboration can produce. Nadeau devotes a full chapter to the ins and outs of the "Aragon affair"; and even the reticent Breton, in a book of interviews in 1952 (published in English as *Conversations: The Autobiography of Surrealism*), admitted that the memory of these partings was "like a wound being re-opened every time." The fact is, he never got over his bitterness and sense of betrayal. But little of this shows through the account given by Durozoi, who, while acknowledging that the break was "surely painful," seems to view the episode mainly as a series of strategic maneuvers. A similar attitude underlies his mention of Breton's subsequent falling-out with Eluard, largely for the same reasons and occasioning a similar wound; for Durozoi, however, it is merely a "situation" to be "dealt with" before moving on to the next political tract. And practically no mention is made of Breton's lover Suzanne Muzard, when their difficult relationship had a large impact both on Breton's life and, through him, on the course of the entire movement.

Which is not to say that details are not given. There are myriads: quotes from scores of articles, descriptions of illustrations, tables of contents from Surrealist publications, even page and issue numbers. Anyone seeking to verify an obscure reference will probably find it here somewhere. But what is missing, except on very rare occasions, is the historian's most valuable contribution, the ability to synthesize: to sort through masses of information, select the most illuminating examples, and extract from them a conclusion or insight that puts it all into perspective. (A sense of narrative would also be nice.) Instead Durozoi's book reads like an account for initiates only, in which facts and names are dropped with little or no explanation. What was Alejo Carpentier doing with the Surrealists, and why was he trying to "foster mistrust"? Why did the group switch from the radical magazine *Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution* to the luxurious art periodical *Minotaure*? In what way was Le Corbusier "obviously hardly compatible" with the Surrealist group? No reply. The author clearly knows his subject and has witnessed some of it firsthand. What he apparently cannot see (with apologies to Magritte) is the forest for the nudes hidden in it.

In those moments when Durozoi does feel moved to comment, he often goes overboard, as in his discussion of Breton's celebrated poem "Free Union." The work, written in 1931 to memorialize the end of Breton's relationship with Muzard, was privately printed as an anonymous pamphlet. Given Breton's arm's-length approach to its promotion and its dissimilarity to his previous opus, it is no wonder that the poem would receive scant review attention, or that only one critic would identify him as the author. The whole episode seems more an instance of biographical whimsy, and hardly "an event of the type to make one reexamine the capacity of contemporaries ... to appreciate poetry, when poetry was not endorsed by a proper name of renown," and still less a reminder of "how bold the anonymity of a text or of a style could be when it resulted, for example, from a collective writing effort like those that the surrealists themselves periodically produced and, also, how anonymity flaunted"—flouted?—"social habits regarding the reception of works."

Still, Durozoi's book is not without its merits, though for each there seems to be a caveat. For one thing, the sheer quantity of minute and not-so-minute facts will save researchers countless trips to the library—even if the woefully inadequate index does not make this information very easy to find. The back matter includes useful capsule biographies of more than two hundred dramatis personae and an extensive, albeit curiously uneven, bibliography. (Why include the Centre Pompidou's general catalogue on the 1950s but not its indispensable *André Breton: La beauté Convulsive,* or Breton's *Conversations* but not his seminal *Manifestoes*?) More importantly, Durozoi evocatively conjures Paris as a Surrealist locus: a city in which the group explored the "lower depths of the spirit," in which "incongruous encounters" seemed to lie in wait around every street corner. And he acutely attributes Dalí's widespread success and (at least in this country) synonymy with Surrealism to his "alliance of the frenzied interpretation and [traditional] pictorial method"—though, again, he ignores one of the keys to Dalí's success: his flawless sense of showmanship and self-promotion.

Durozoi is at his best, and his most impartial, in weighing the relative strengths and inconsistencies of the Surrealists' social and political attitudes—no negligible matter, since, as he notes, many in the group considered their literary and artistic activity "to be a real danger for social order, particularly when it sought to change habits, morality, taste." Yet not even the movement's staunchest supporters could maintain that Surrealism transformed the world in any appreciable way, and Durozoi's summation seems judicious. "Although surrealism did not manage to change life," he concedes, "it managed nevertheless ... 'to infuse it with fresh air.' "

SUCH MOMENTS, AND THE CENTRAL questions they raise, make one wish all the more that Durozoi had been able to abandon his fear of missing a reference, kick away the scaffolding of his endless names and dates, and write, once and for all, the passionate, blood-sweat-and-tears history that Surrealism deserves. With increasing frequency, in the movement's final years the Surrealists railed against the danger of ossification, the academicization of their efforts that they saw at the hands of sympathetic but obtuse professors and literary critics. Yet as René Daumal recognized only too well, the greatest threat comes from within the gates.

Some of these well-intentioned academics get their say in *Surrealism: Desire Unbound*. Published to accompany a major retrospective at the Tate Modern and at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the book, by its very nature and presentation, perpetuates the common misconception that Surrealism was primarily an artistic phenomenon. The iconography is suitably copious—so copious, in fact, that despite hundreds of illustrations in each volume, there is strikingly little overlap between this book and Durozoi's, testifying to the breadth and the quantity of Surrealism's

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visual outpourings. The thirteen essays, by well-known scholars in the field, are bedecked in all the requisite footnotes; and the design and manufacturing standards are impeccable. This is the kind of lavish volume traditionally produced for Impressionist blockbusters. In many ways, it is everything one could want in an exhibition catalogue. And in those same ways, it is everything that Surrealism was not.

Surrealism: Desire Unbound, in the words of Nicholas Serota, "explores one of the central themes of the movement: the idea that man is a creature who is driven by desire." Yet, as Jennifer Mundy, the book's general editor, points out, "In the early years of the surrealist movement desire was not a dominant theme. For much of the 1920s the group focused on the dream, revolution, poetry, and, above all, love, and although desire was implicit in all of these, it was not identified as a major aspect." (That is one view: other contributors suggest that it was an explicit concern from the start.) Mundy attributes the shift toward a more focused examination of desire in the early 1930s to a "greater familiarity with the writings of Sigmund Freud," though one could also point to the arrival of figures such as Dalí. Bored with automatic writing, uninterested in communism (with which the group as a whole was also starting to get disillusioned), and eager to stake out his own territory within Surrealism, Dalí promoted desire and its vicissitudes as the one area of research he could make his own. Breton, meanwhile, dispirited by the failure of automatism to bring about a mental revolution, and by constant jilting from the PCF, looked to Dalí in those years to bring new blood and a fresh perspective to his flagging movement. Although by decade's end Dalí's professed sympathy for fascism, his courting of riches, and (perhaps more to the point) his open satirizing of Breton's initiatives had earned him the dismissive sobriquet "Avida Dollars," for much of the 1930s the Spaniard was arguably the most influential figure in Surrealism.

There is, to be sure, a certain amount of hubris involved in labeling, as one essayist does, an intangible and very human force like desire a "Surrealist invention." What the Surrealists *did* add to the expression of desire, or at least brought to the fore more than any of their contemporaries, was a sense of desperation and unvarnished frankness. "The surrealists explored desire with a humor that was alternately black and ribald, and, above all, with passion," Mundy writes, adding that the intensity of their "commitment to a broad, uncensored vision of human nature" lent immediacy to their collective opus and, more subversively, challenged reigning social attitudes and institutions. At the same time, the exploration of desire revealed a fair amount of naïve idealization. David Lomas, in one of the volume's more interesting essays, cites the Surrealists' reproduction of hospital photographs of a young hysteria patient as a case in point: while Breton chose to exalt these images as "veritable *tableaux vivants* of a woman in love," he ignored the circumstances of rape and family betrayal that had landed the girl there in the first place—a lapse all the more striking considering that Breton had worked with trauma victims as a medical intern during the war.

Breton once remarked that it wasn't happiness that he sought in love but simply love itself, and his belief in it was as intransigent as most of his other positions. As Mundy points out, he ascribed many of his breakups with other Surrealists not to political differences but to "fundamental disagreements between him and others about [the] question of the ethics of love and sex." A classic serial monogamist, Breton clung to the notion of *l'amour fou,* the idea of the one predestined love object, and he sharply criticized friends such as the priapic Eluard for their promiscuity. He reported the details of his passionate affair with Suzanne Muzard to his first wife, Simone, and (at least in his telling) was outraged to discover her own affair with another Surrealist not because of the affair itself but because she had kept it hidden from him.

These attitudes, and the episodes behind them, were often central to the group's evolution. And if Mundy's amazement at "how much of the art and the poetry of the group was inspired by real love affairs" could probably be applied to centuries of artists, the Surrealists, more than most others at the time, directly drew on their lived experience of desire for their output. More often than not, the most successful and affecting of these productions were the ones that applied the Surrealist vision to a naked expression of reality. The same, in fact, could be said about commentary on Surrealism. It is noteworthy that the most useful and interesting chapter in *Surrealism: Desire Unbound* is also the most straightforward: a series of short multiple portraits by Vincent Gille detailing the relations between various Surrealists and their lovers and friends. For once the book dispenses with theorizing and secondary sources in favor of good old narrative, and the result is fascinating.

Not surprisingly, several of the contributors to this volume, most notably Dawn Ades, speak pertinently of the role of women in Surrealism as muses, lovers, and even participants. It is a commonplace, and not unfounded, that women occupied a doubly frustrating role in Surrealism: at once idealized and kept to the sidelines, celebrated as concepts but denied individual needs and creative impulses. The attitude is encouraged by the Surrealists' own paintings, which alternately exalt and violate the desired object; or writings such as Breton's *Arcanum 17,* which promotes a feminized view of society while relegating woman to the status of a child. On the other hand, notes Ades, the debate around women and surrealism has also served to focus new attention on artists such as Leonora Carrington, Claude Cahun, Meret Oppenheim (the creator of the famous fur-lined teacup), and Joyce Mansour. And she rightly remarks that it was largely the possibilities opened by Surrealism that made their works possible.

The part left unsaid, of course, is that this debate, and the attention being accorded many of these artists, takes place mainly within the halls of academe rather than in Surrealism's natural habitat, the streets. As early as his first *Manifesto,* Breton was unambiguous about his desire to put "the surrealist atmosphere created by automatic writing . . . within the reach of everyone." And he made it clear, as he would throughout his life, that the stakes rose much higher than mere art and literature: "It is living and ceasing to live that are imaginary solutions," he ended the book. "Existence is elsewhere." Such statements highlight the main shortcoming of both these oddly joyless books: that their true province is that of the specialist and the scholar, rather than that of the everyman and everywoman whom Surrealism wanted so desperately to reach. Both volumes offer a good collective representation of Surrealist art, and will no doubt serve as important reference materials for generations of scholars to come. But, to paraphrase Breton, Surrealism is elsewhere. ■

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CAMBRIDGE DIARIST

A Universal Man

ONLY A SMALL MINORITY OF readers will know the name Frank Manuel, but they are the lucky ones. For he was one of the seminal intellectual historians of the last half-century, in the grand tradition of Arthur O. Lovejoy and Carl Becker (also not exactly household names). Isaiah Berlin was his near-contemporary, and they were similarly inflamed: Like Berlin, Manuel combined a passionate interest in the history of ideas with a passionate interest in Jewish thought, two masterful scholars equally at home in the culture of the "other" and in their own. In their old age and at about the same time, one published a book titled *The Broken Staff*, and the other published a book titled *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*. You might take these titles as metaphors for the erosion of their own powers, and perhaps they thought so, too. But they were wrong: Their thinking mattered urgently till the end. Berlin wrote mostly essays, so he seemed, in the current coinage, more accessible. Manuel wrote heavy tomes from which, it is likely, college professors often cribbed their lectures, as I did more than once.

MANUEL, WHO DIED LAST WEEK AT THE age of 92, was an unusually lucid writer, but he was never concerned to make his instruction easy. I first encountered him as a freshman at Brandeis, where he was my professor in one of those general-education core courses that have for years now been waved away as a sheer survey of subjects, "From Plato to NATO." No longer in fashion—of the major intellectual centers, only Columbia and Chicago still require them—their replacement by *petites histoires* has left generations of students, and professors, not knowing the difference between the medieval church and the Reformation.

MANUEL, HOWEVER, WAS WHAT USED TO be called a universal man. His erudition was almost unlimited. He knew all the languages that his subjects required him to know. He was mentally comfortable in ancient Athens and Renaissance Florence, in Ottoman Constantinople and Stuart England, among the Talmudists and the Church Fathers. He never romanticized the oppressed, or replaced the study of ideas and ideologies with the study of "material culture," or rejected inquiry into the history of religion and politics in favor of inquiry into the history of food and sex. He once told *The Boston Globe*, "I do not attempt to talk about the thoughts of dead peasants." The remark is less cruel than it sounds. Manuel was simply keeping faith with an older tradition of historiography, which excited him more because it explained more. He believed that big questions awaited big answers.

DURING THE LATE '50S, WHEN I FIRST knew him, Manuel was engaged in his great project of interpreting in three books the French Enlightenment thought of men such as Saint-Simon, Condorcet, and Pierre Bayle. He would then set these obsessives and dreamers in comprehensive context in a huge book co-authored with his extraordinary wife, Fritzie, the true partner of his mind, *Utopian Thought in the Western World*. He devoted perhaps a decade of his own life to the life of Isaac Newton, not just Newton the scientist but Newton the theologian and historian. Three books came out of this period, volumes that aimed at illuminating also Newton's inner psychological life.

MANUEL, I WILL ADMIT, TAUGHT A little by terror. It was the brave student who showed up in class not having done the prescribed reading. "Tell us, Mister Gordon," Manuel would suddenly thunder, "which of Fourier's typologies do you find most unrealistic, and why?" This is not the kind of challenge to which one could improvise a response. At ten after the hour, the class door was shut. No one could enter. But studying with Manuel was not all rigors, not at all. If he was lecturing on Napoleon's catastrophic siege of Moscow, you'd hear the "1812 Overture" from the hour to ten after. If he was teaching Nietzsche, he would have "Also Sprach Zarathustra" on the phonograph. It may be that he actually had notes, but he was too restless to depend on them. He moved agilely around, on one leg and two braced crutches. He spoke in polished paragraphs, dense thought made vivid by a poetry of history—metaphoric, evocative, allusive, and always crammed with facts.

I PARTICULARLY REMEMBER HIM FROM a certain day in the fall of 1956. It was the time of Stevenson versus Eisenhower, the Suez Crisis, Polish October, and then the rising of students and workers in the streets of Budapest against Communist tyranny. The Brandeis campus was rattled. The night before, Professor Herbert Marcuse, who would less than a decade later become the very satisfied and cynical academic hero of the New Left, had told a student audience that, between the anti-communist revolutionaries favored by the CIA and the Soviet Red Army, he preferred the Red Army. Then, the next day, there was another gathering. Manuel maneuvered his way up the stage and to the podium. He looked at the audience with his dark, penetrating eyes. He was silent for a time, and then he said, "I've come to tell you that a people can be crushed." He knew why and told us. He had covered Spain for Max Lerner's *The Nation*, and he wrote a book about it, *The Politics of Modern Spain*.

MANUEL WAS BORN IN 1910. HE GOT his B.A. and Ph.D. from Harvard, but there was no chance that in 1933 Manuel, a Jew, might get a teaching appointment there. (At about the same time, the now-famed economist Paul Samuelson was told of the same ugly reality.) But he caught the eye of Felix Frankfurter, that great talent scout for the New Deal, who got him a job running the Depression-era Works Progress Administration Federal Writers' Project in New England, which produced hundreds of invaluable local histories and gave unemployed authors work. Under John Kenneth Galbraith, he then helped run the price-control administration in Washington. His second book, in 1949, was *The Realities of American-Palestine Relations*, a primer even now for what delusions we ought to avoid.

"WHAT IS YOUR WISDOM?" I ONCE ASKED him. And this probing and vivacious and deeply engaged historian of ideas answered, "Be skeptical of enthusiasms, your own and those of others." He rendered his judgment on the age of enthusiasms and on the enthusiasms of many intellectuals in a late book, *A Requiem for Karl Marx*. Now, the time has come for Manuel's own requiem, except that so much of Manuel still lives. May my teacher forgive me, but I will have no skepticism about my enthusiasm, no, my love, for him.

MARTIN PERETZ

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What's the difference between $110,100 and $27,800?

$110,100

You could be paying for it.

$27,800

An obstetrician in Illinois pays $110,100 a year for malpractice insurance. Next door in Wisconsin, the same doctor would pay $27,800. Why?

There's no good answer, except that the U.S. medical malpractice system is badly broken, and it's threatening the accessibility, affordability and quality of healthcare for millions. Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans cover nearly one in three Americans. Eighty-eight percent of these plans report that the medical malpractice insurance problem increases healthcare costs and decreases access to care – especially for high-risk specialties. Three-quarters of physicians responding to a Harris survey in February said malpractice insurance concerns cause them to order unnecessary tests and make redundant referrals.

Americans know they're picking up the tab for these preventable costs. A separate Harris survey found that 58 percent favor new legislation to limit medical liability and reduce the costs of medical malpractice insurance.

The problem doesn't end there. A new report by the Department of Health and Human Services found that because of the malpractice insurance predicament, "more patients in more states are facing greater difficulty in obtaining access to doctors." Rising rates cause some physicians to refuse high-risk procedures, move their practices to more malpractice-friendly jurisdictions or retire from medicine entirely. Again, Americans know the score. Fifty-nine percent think that malpractice suits and doctors' fear of being sued harm the quality of medical care.

Fortunately, there are steps we can take now to fix this problem before it gets worse. With the leadership of President Bush, Congress has introduced new legislation based on a California law with a quarter-century track record of controlling malpractice costs. BCBSA believes the legislation, which has passed the House and awaits action in the Senate, offers an excellent framework.

Like California and other states that have enacted medical liability reform, the federal legislation would limit "non-economic" damages to $250,000. An analysis by *USA Today* shows that states limiting such awards to $500,000 or less have average malpractice premiums 23 percent lower than states without limits. It is critically important that these protections be extended to all healthcare stakeholders.

As the nation's largest family of healthcare insurance companies, it's clear to us that solving the problem of rising healthcare costs requires a coordinated approach to out-of-control malpractice costs. Most Americans agree.

BCBSA has joined with more than 50 organizations – representing physicians, hospitals, employers, insurers and consumers – in the Health Coalition on Liability and Access. Together we are urging Congress to pass common-sense federal medical liability reforms which protect patients' access to care.

BlueCross BlueShield Association

An Association of Independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans

For more information, visit our Web site at *www.bcbs.com* and click on 'medical liability reform.'

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Vaccine Development a Casualty of Flawed Public Policy

Henry I. Miller, M.D., is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

The death toll from SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) continues to rise. Thousands have been stricken, and hundreds worldwide have died. With the discovery of the causative agent—a previously unknown member of the Coronavirus family—and researchers' ability to grow the virus in tissue culture, American drug and biotech companies should be burning the midnight oil to create a vaccine. But flawed public policy discourages vaccine development; even supplies of vaccines from common, epidemic infectious diseases are in jeopardy.

Producers have abandoned the field in droves. From 1967 to the present, the number of U.S. vaccine manufacturers has fallen from thirty-seven to less than ten, and the number of FDA-approved vaccines has declined from 380 to a few dozen. Consequently, the nation has experienced shortages of essential vaccines, and many school systems have been forced to waive immunization requirements as a result of insufficient supplies. The reason is that, compared to therapeutic drugs, **vaccines traditionally offer low return on investment but high exposure to legal liability.**

This situation is largely the result of wrongheaded public policy. For example, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC)—the largest domestic purchaser of vaccines—uses its buying clout to compel discounts for purchases. Recently, the CDC rejected Wyeth Lederle Vaccines' proposed price of $58 a dose for its pneumococcus vaccine, demanding (and getting) a discount of $10 off the proposed price. Do not expect Lederle to invest much in vaccine R&D anytime soon.

Excessive regulation also blocks progress. Consider the FDA's inexplicable position on a vaccine to prevent meningitis C, an illness that infects thousands of Americans and kills hundreds each year. No state-of-the-art vaccine against this disease has been approved for use in the United States, although three products are available in Canada and Europe. The efficacy of these vaccines has been amply demonstrated, with more than twenty million doses administered. Yet the FDA refuses to recognize the foreign approvals. In addition, the FDA has a history of removing safe vaccines from the market because of mere *perceptions* of side effects—a prospect that terrifies manufacturers.

What can we do to make vaccine development more attractive? First, make vaccine regulatory approvals between the United States and the European Union reciprocal, which would cut development costs and rationalize the FDA's oversight of vaccines.

Second, stop public agencies from demanding prices for vaccines that are too low.

Third, give companies tax credits to defray research and development costs.

Fourth, ensure that companies' performing government-sponsored R&D under contract can realize commercial benefits when the vaccine is produced.

Finally, indemnify reasonable damages to consumers from harm caused by vaccines, and establish a regulatory-compliance defense against lawsuits for damages. Such a defense stipulates that, after a manufacturer has met the regulatory requirements for vaccine approval, any mishap from use of the product is considered to be unforeseeable and damages would be compensated by the government.

These much-needed reforms won't come easy. Getting the government to adopt them will be like dragging a child to the doctor for a painful shot.

— Henry I. Miller, M.D.

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